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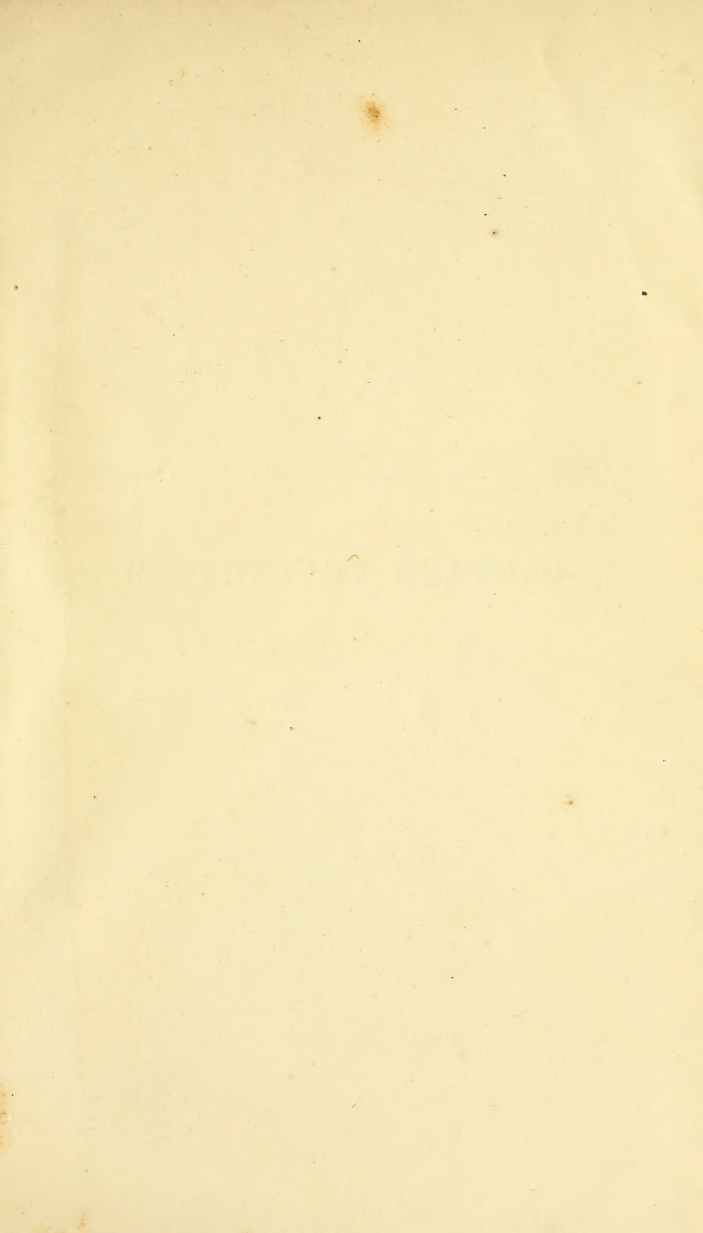
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HISTORY OF BELFAST





A HISTORY  
OF  
THE TOWN OF BELFAST

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FROM  
THE EARLIEST TIMES  
TO  
THE CLOSE OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

*With Maps and Illustrations*

BY  
GEORGE BENN  
//



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## P R E F A C E.

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**Y**AVING in early life turned my attention to historical and  
**A** topographical matters connected with Belfast and its neighbourhood, my inquiries resulting in a publication relative thereto, without my name, so long back as 1823, it was suggested to me, a few years ago, that the time had arrived when it would be desirable to resume the subject with more matured experience and greater knowledge. I declined then to do so, but mentioned to those who were taking an interest in it that Mr. William Pinkerton was the only person whom I knew who was qualified to take it up with effect, and that I would communicate with him on the subject. I accordingly did so, and, after some correspondence, he consented to compile a full history of Belfast. He proceeded to collect materials for the purpose, but unfortunately died in 1871, leaving the documents which he had gathered unarranged, and the history unwritten. This caused great regret and disappointment. Mr. Pinkerton's writings in several high-class publications were much esteemed; he was a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, and his general qualifications for the task he had undertaken were admitted by all who knew him. Some time after his decease his papers were given to me. I voluntarily undertook, before examining them, to publish those parts which related to Belfast, under the impression that such would merely require



some connecting observations, and not entail any great amount of labour. The examination of the papers proved such a scheme to be impracticable. They consisted to some extent of general literary matter having no connection with Belfast; in other cases, of information more relating to North of Ireland history than to that of this town; and in nearly all instances they were disjointed and unconnected. The writing of the history was not even begun, nor any of it put in form except a few detached portions which Mr. Pinkerton most favoured. Under these circumstances, no alternative seemed to be left to me but to write the history myself in my own way. I have therefore done so; it is all my own work from beginning to end, using, of course, such selections from the papers that were given to me as I thought suitable for my purpose, in the same manner which I adopted with the far greater number obtained by myself and procured from others during the last five years, equally acknowledging in all cases the sources of the information used.

I am conscious of the great defects of my labours, of wants not in my power to fill up, possibly of many errors, and of having been forced for want of space to pass too lightly over important subjects. It was impossible for me to extend the history into the present century, except in a few instances as continuations or completions of articles begun in the previous one. But the history of Belfast from the beginning of the nineteenth century to this time would probably be more acceptable to the present inhabitants than the older subjects to which I was led by inclination, by the want of knowledge which generally appeared to prevail regarding the

ancient annals of the town, and by the apprehension that, if not published now, they might be difficult ever again to gather. If Mr. Pinkerton had lived to write what he appears to have contemplated, a publication of higher general historic value would possibly have been the result; but the history being with me confined to Belfast and its more immediate relations, my subject, of necessity, is more local and contracted. Some of it, at least, should interest the descendants of the old inhabitants, and perhaps also in some measure the infinitely greater number of persons who have in recent years made Belfast their home.

It is needless to mention here the names of the many kind friends who have given me valuable papers or general assistance. Their contributions are acknowledged in the work itself where the subjects to which they refer arise, and should any have been omitted, I know I will be excused for the unintentional forgetfulness.

GEORGE BENN.

BELFAST, *June, 1877.*





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# HISTORY OF BELFAST.

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## CHAPTER I.

### GENERAL HISTORY.

**B**ELFAST, as a town, has no ancient history. The Ford, the Castle, the Church, were the three distinguishing objects which made the locality known in early days.

The territory in which these places were situated was called in most remote times Dalaradia.<sup>1</sup> This part of Ulster was also named Uladh, and the numerous battles and events which occurred from the very dawn of Irish history in the districts

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<sup>1</sup> Dalaradia was the undoubted name of the territory in which the modern Belfast is situated. The distinction between it and Dalriada is clearly proved by Dr. Reeves in his *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down and Connor*, particularly at pp. 318 and 334. Elsewhere he says—"Dalriada, in the interior of the County of Antrim, never came as far south as Ballymena nor along the coast beyond Larne; it was the northern half of the county," and the name contractedly written *Ruta* is still called the Route (p. 318); but Dalaradia stretched in its most extended meaning from Newry, in the County of Down, to the mountain Mis (Slemish), in the County of Antrim (p. 335), including in that wide scope the site of Belfast.

The late Dr. O'Donovan, in the *Dublin Penny Journal*, p. 362, proves with equal clearness, from documentary evidence and the topography of the country, that the *Buas* is the Bush of modern days, and not the Lagan, as has been advocated by O'Connor, O'Flaherty, Archdall, and others.

Inquiries connected with this subject are extremely curious and interesting, more particularly when documents descriptive of unchanging topographical features render the conclusions undoubted. The rivers that flowed more than a thousand years ago still flow on; the promontories and other natural objects still stand unchanged, except by the rude assaults of time, and remain the boundaries and landmarks which the old writers describe. On these foundations the learning of Dr. Reeves and Dr. O'Donovan alone of those who have written on the subject have placed the boundaries and dividing lines of Dalaradia and Dalriada on an indisputable basis.

so called are circumstantially recorded, and the site or neighbourhood of the future Belfast was doubtless the scene of many of them.

The Lough or Bay of Belfast was known as Loch Laoigh, or as Lacus Vituli according to Adamnan, and was the frequent resort of the roving Danes in the early centuries of our era. It was safe and accessible, and the country around, even then, must have presented many inducements for settlement or plunder. Trade in some form was also probably introduced by the Northmen; and the minute history of those times, if recoverable, would explain many difficulties in connection with the material antiquities found in Eastern Ulster, and be in every respect highly valuable.<sup>1</sup>

Some of the early battles recorded give faint indications of the state of the country at the time, and two events with distinct dates are noticed, having special reference to Belfast. The Ford, or rather the Fearsat—which, under the name then given to it, runs through the modern town—was the scene of a battle in the year 666. It is thus mentioned—

“The battle of Fearsat, between the Ulidians<sup>2</sup> and the Cruithni, where Cathasach, son of Laircine, was slain. The Fearsat here alluded to was evidently at Bel-Feirste, now Belfast, on the river Lagan, in the county of Antrim.”<sup>3</sup>

The other notice, nearly identical in point of date, is still more interesting, showing that in the neighbourhood of Belfast was a royal residence in the old days.

“In A.D. 680, as mentioned in O’Conor’s *Dissertations*, Cathasach

<sup>1</sup> Danish names in near connection with this locality can be traced. Thus, Crookmouth, the original harbour of Belfast; hence probably Cromack;—Cope-land Islands, Olderfleet, Portavo, Dunsford, Strangford, and many more.

In a letter from the late Dr. O’Donovan, relating to this subject, he says—“I have no doubt that the Danes and Norwegians imposed many names upon localities on our coasts. I am also persuaded that wherever we have *loop* and *crook* on the coast, they are of Norse origin.

<sup>2</sup> Uladh, Ulidia, Dalaradia, Dalriada were all contemporary names, the two first meaning Ulster, or Eastern Ulster only, or Down and Antrim.

<sup>3</sup> *Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. i., p. 279 and note.

and Ultan, princes of the Cruithnians of Dalaradia, leagued with the Britains to invade Ireland, and united their forces at Rathmore, in Magh Line. . . . This Rathmore was a royal residence of the kings of Dalaradia ; it was situated in the parish now called Donegore, in the county of Antrim.”<sup>1</sup>

Such, it may be said, are examples of the public transactions which continued for centuries among the chiefs of Dalaradia, or Dalriada. Wars among themselves and their kindred in Scotland or the Isles were the pastimes of their lives. Their domestic history would be much more attractive, but no chronicler has preserved it with that accuracy or fulness of detail which modern curiosity requires. The great change which interfered with those relations was the Anglo-Norman invasion of 1171. Some years after that event—namely, in 1177—one of the most distinguished of the foreign adventurers, accompanied by many knightly followers and a small army of English and Irish, gained power in the counties of Down and Antrim, forming at that time, as they do still, the most important district in the province. This was John De Curci of famous memory. He was nearly related to the King of Man ; he was created Earl of Ulster by Henry the Second, and is called by a monkish chronicler “Prince of Ulidia,” meaning here the two counties of Down and Antrim. He lived in almost regal magnificence at Downpatrick, which was the place of his first conquest ; and finally coined money, specimens of which have been but recently discovered. He founded churches, and erected castles commanding the bays and mountain passes.”<sup>2</sup> It is true, De Curci had fixed his chief residence at Downpatrick, but there can be no doubt that the situation of what is now Belfast, and the ford or fords there forming the connecting link between his possessions in Down and Antrim, must have soon attracted his attention, as it did

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<sup>1</sup> *Annals of the Four Masters*, p. 20, Connellan's translation. It is certain that about ten miles from Belfast a very extensive fort, called Rathmore, in the parish named, still exists ; and, in comparison with many others in its neighbourhood, was fit to be a royal residence, as kings' palaces were in the year 680 ; and a king's residence it traditionally was.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert's *History of the Irish Viceroys*, p. 60.



that of other adventurers in after days; and that he must have looked upon it as a suitable site for a castle to command the bay, the river pass, and the surrounding country. Whether the Castle of Belfast was built by De Curci or some of his followers, no means now exist to prove; but there is every probability that, either by his direction or that of his immediate successor, the next Earl of Ulster, the Castle of Belfast was first erected, and its importance speedily established. De Curci ruled over Down and Antrim for a considerable time, with some of those vicissitudes of fortune common to all who live in warlike times. He was the first Anglo-Norman or English possessor of the site of Belfast and the surrounding country. The opposition of the original owners may have made it but a nominal sovereignty, though the circumstance that he coined money both in Downpatrick and Carrickfergus<sup>1</sup> would warrant the assumption that he held sway over the land from one point to the other.

The Church was about a mile and a-half distant from the Castle of Belfast. It is not necessary in this place to enter into any ecclesiastical details, but merely to record, as the third distinctive mark of the locality, that, some centuries before the modern town had existence, there was standing in the present Shankhill graveyard a church called the White Church, afterwards Shankhill, or the Old Church. Whether this church was erected by De Curci or one of his immediate successors, or whether it was the work of some Irish chief before the invaders set foot in Dalaradia, it is now impossible to ascertain. To it were attached several subordinate churches or alterages, one of which, the Chapel of the Ford, stood where St. George's Church,

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<sup>1</sup> The great discovery of coins, proving this fact, is related at full length by Dr. Aquilla Smith in a communication to the Numismatic Society of London, and also in pamphlet form. The coins, 1115 in number, were found in County Down in 1858, but the exact locality is not known. Dr. Smith satisfactorily proves that among them are silver farthings coined by John De Curci, and in his most interesting pamphlet truly says—"The discovery, after the lapse of nearly seven centuries, of so large a number of coins, presenting five different coinages and three distinct types—two of towns not previously known to have coined silver money, and one with the name of a subject on the reverse—is a very remarkable fact."

in High Street, Belfast, has since been built. Its existence at that place, and its name, indicate the ford or passage near it to have been important and in frequent use. Both these buildings, surrounded with all the accessories of their sacred character, were standing at or in what was to be our town so early as the year 1306,<sup>1</sup> and it is probable, or rather it is certain, long before that remote era.

King John came to Ireland in 1210. On this occasion he travelled by known routes to the North, and was ten days in Carrickfergus. He returned to Dublin, as recorded, "by way of Holywood<sup>2</sup> and *Ballimore*," the former place being the nearest to the Ford of Belfast mentioned as in his course; the second was Ballymorran, in Killinchy. For more than a century after this time, the Anglo-Normans increased and consolidated their power in North-Eastern Ulster. Castles were built, the sites of many of which are yet known; and improvements, after the fashion of the day, spread over the country. This progressive civilisation received a rude check from the invasion of Edward Bruce in 1315. The account of that invasion, how it originated, its success for a time, the occupation of Carrickfergus by Bruce for a considerable period, the visit of King Robert his brother to that town, and the utter devastation which accompanied and

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<sup>1</sup> Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> John must either have crossed to Holywood by water, or else passed by the Ford. There is an old bridge still known by the name of the King's Bridge, said, traditionally, to be so called because King John passed over it. It is across a small stream near Con's Water Bridge; has one arch about four feet wide, but is not likely to be that which existed in the days of King John. The route was the direct one from the Ford to Holywood. It is, however, a singular-looking structure, and of some antiquity: but how varying and uncertain is tradition! King John has not the undisputed honour of association with this small bridge. A person living near it said he had heard it called King Con's Bridge, meaning Con O'Neill of Castlereagh, from whom the adjoining river, Con's Water, derives its name. Another said he had known it called King William's Bridge, because King William, when in Belfast, had passed over it on his way to Orangefield, not very far distant, and where he had passed a night. Of the three kings, King Con was the most likely to have given his name to this bridge, even if so old as his time. There is no proof whatever that King William was ever at the place now called Orangefield.

followed the invasion—belong to the general history of Ireland, and are among the most romantic and eventful incidents which that history contains. The connection of this locality with it is briefly told. “The country,” says Spenser, “had become a well-inhabited and prosperous district, having in the midst Knockfergus, Belfast, Armagh, and Carlingford. . . . Bruce wasted Belfast, Greencastle, Kells, Bellturbet, Castletown, Newton, and many other very good towns and strongholds.”<sup>1</sup> The great poet has here twice introduced the name of Belfast, and if he included it and some others among good towns he must have written on very imperfect information. He lived two hundred and fifty years after the events,<sup>2</sup> and even during that long interval Belfast had only reached the position of a castle of inconsiderable pretensions. It was held by De Maundeville, which name appears a few years later so conspicuously in connection with it; was certainly destroyed in those disastrous wars, and its owner, the Maundeville of that day, slain in Carrickfergus by Edward Bruce himself. Previously to these events, the ancient names, Dalaradia and Dalriada, had probably disappeared; the territory had been divided by the Anglo-Normans into the three counties of “Cragfergus, Antrum, and Newtown of Bloethwyc.” The two first names are obvious; the third is the modern Newtownards, the term Bloethwyc referring to the ecclesiastical title of the district in which it lay. In which of the three divisions the site of Belfast was situated is nowhere stated, but there is little doubt that it was in the first named, and that it was a small auxiliary to the great fortress of Carrickfergus.

Through all these disastrous circumstances the Anglo-Norman power was not extinguished. An Earl of Ulster still ruled, though with diminished influence. In 1333 that Earl was William

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<sup>1</sup> Spenser's *View of the State of Ireland*, vol. i., p. 27.

<sup>2</sup> For a lengthened account of Bruce's invasion—its motives, progress, and results under all the light of modern investigation—see the papers by Mr. Hore, called the *Bruces in Ireland*, beginning at vol. v., p. 1, in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*.

De Burgo, then in his early youth. His possessions were great in the West of Ireland, but his residence, and that of some of his predecessors, was chiefly in Ulster, most probably at Carrickfergus. The fate and history of William De Burgo, so far as they are connected with our locality, will best be disclosed by extracts from the Irish annalists. He had been at strife with John De Logan, one of his own original blood and nation; dissensions had sprung up with his near relations also; and, finally, it is related "that he was murdered on Sunday, the 6th of June, 1333, by Robert Fitzrichard Mandeville (who gave him the first wound) and others, his servants, near to the *Fords* in going towards Carrickfergus."<sup>1</sup> Another annalist distinctly relates that this event took place between Cragfergus and Newtown, language which points to the same spot—the ford across the Lagan, the site of the future Belfast. More explicitly still is the fatal story told at greater length by Grace, whose narrative, somewhat abridged, is thus translated—

"William De Burgh, Earl of Ulster, was slain by his own relations between the camp at Shankhill and Carrickfergus."<sup>2</sup> . . . He had

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<sup>1</sup> Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. i., p. 124.

<sup>2</sup> The proper language by some is said to be *inter castra in de Sancles*. By others the Latin is *inter castrum de Sancles et Gregfergus*, which is probably that intended by the original writer, *Castrum de Sancles* being the Castle of Belfast; at least no other meaning can well be taken out of it, though it is an example of looseness of phraseology to be condemned, and it never appears to have acquired permanency. Mr. Hore states that the Maundeville here so inauspiciously introduced, though one of the name held lands in the Dufferin shortly after the first invasion, was owner, of course under De Burgo, of the Castle of Belfast. He gives no authority for this, but further inquiry may fully establish it. De Burgo himself is distinctly said to have owned at the time of his death "*apud Le Ford, manium in quo est unum castrum prostratum per guerram Johannis de Logan*."—Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, p. 6. This was certainly the Castle of Belfast, and is a very distinct and interesting notice of it. It is also thought, on good grounds, that the word *Fogan* in the text should be *Logan*, referring to one of the persons whose wars and rebellion, together with the unhappy results of Edward Bruce's invasion, had uprooted the castles of De Burgo, deteriorated his lands, and greatly reduced the value of his earldom.

There is nothing in the Inquisition *post mortem* giving any information as to the manner or place of De Burgo's death. The consequences of it were impor-

maltreated<sup>1</sup> his uncle, Richard de Burgh, partly for outrageously insulting his wife, and partly for other reasons. A sister of this Richard had married Lord John Maundeville of Donnahir, and she ceased not to urge her husband to avenge her brother. Accordingly, one Sunday, when he was riding to church from the camp of Shank-hill, towards Carrickfergus, the earl (Maundeville?) noticing that more of his servants were of the Fogan family (Logan?) than were with the Earl (of Ulster?) on the high road, while saying morning prayers with him, he cleft his skull with a sword-stroke behind."<sup>2</sup>

Several other annalists relate the event much in the same

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tant, beyond the interruption to the advance of the immediate neighbourhood where it happened. The annalists state that his wife, struck with fear, fled with her infant daughter to England. That infant daughter afterwards married the Duke of Clarence, son of Edward the Third, and was ancestress of Edward the Fourth, by which the Earldom of Ulster became a Crown possession in name, and the English monarchs Earls of Ulster. Queen Elizabeth spoke of her Earldom of Ulster, and claimed the right of disposing of it; and it is to this day a regal title attached to the Crown of England. Lionel, Duke of Clarence, became Earl of Ulster in right of his wife, and the descent and connections are fully traced in *Lodge's Peerage* by Archdall, vol. i., p. 125.

<sup>1</sup> The maltreatment inflicted by the young earl on his kinsman for alleged insults to his wife was rather a serious one, and is succinctly related in these words by one of the chroniclers—"1332. Walter, son of Sir William Burk, was taken prisoner by the Brown Earl, who afterwards took him with him to the new castle of Inis-Eoghain; and he died of hunger in the prison of that castle." *Note*.—"New Castle, Green Castle, near the mouth of Lough Foyle, in the Barony of Innishowen and County of Donegal."—*Annals of Loch Cé*, vol. i., p. 617.

<sup>2</sup> *Jac. Grace Annales Hiberniæ*, p. 126.

Another chronicler, in the *Annales of Ireland*, thus describes the death of De Burgo:—

"1333. Also, William Burk, Earle of Ulster, between the New Towne and Cragfergus in Vlster, was traitorously (the more pitty) slaine by his owne company in the twentieth yeere of his age, on the sixth day of the moneth June. Robert, the son of Mauriton Maundevil, was he that gave him his first wound."

The treacherous murder of the young De Burgo excited the rage of the country against all, directly or indirectly, implicated in it. They were pursued and punished; and long after, in pardons granted to criminals, it was usual to except those who had aided or abetted, or been any way concerned in, the murder of William De Burgo. So strong was this feeling, that in the curious chronicle of Irish affairs from 1014 to 1590, called the *Annals of Loch Cé*, recently translated from the original Irish by W. M. Hennessy, confirmation of it appears in these words—"William Burk, *i.e.*, the Earl of Ulster, was slain by the foreigners of Ulster; and all these foreigners fell in return, having been either hanged, slain, or torn asunder by the king of the Saxons' people."—Vol. i., p. 617.

manner. This catastrophe, coming so soon after Bruce's invasion, completed the confusion and misery of the country. The Irish chiefs soon took advantage of the weakness and dissensions of their enemies. Their rule became once more predominant; the descendants of the early Anglo-Norman settlers sank in power and influence, and it is stated on sufficient authority that these two events—Bruce's invasion and the murder of William De Burgo—led in the end, if not to the extinction of English power for three centuries in this part of Ulster, at least, with occasional brighter glimpses and formal acknowledgments of sovereignty, to the loss, for that lengthened time, of all supreme and sustained authority.

The O'Neills, beyond the influence of the Norman settlers, had for some years been gaining strength, and a sept which was not a remote branch of that princely house became influential in what were probably the old possessions of their ancestors. They were called the family or tribe of Aodh Buidhe O'Neill, that is, Hugh Boy, or the Yellow. This clan name, in a kind of Anglicised form, extended itself to the broad lands of the district, which became Clannaboye, a name not unknown even at the present day. Two distinct districts in Antrim and Down were called North and South—sometimes Upper and Lower—Clannaboye; in the former of which the Castle and the Churches of Shankhill or Belfast were situated. The Castle passed into the hands of the O'Neills, or at least was in their possession, on early subsequent occasions. The presumed right to it and other places and castles around was not abandoned by the disorganised colony or by the Government, but acted on when occasion arose, and apparently acquiesced in or resisted by the native chiefs, as English or Irish power predominated. From this circumstance, from this disputed or divided power, and from the obscurity and insignificance of the place itself, the notices of Belfast for many ages are few and unsatisfactory. The petty wars of the time—of the Irish with the colonists, with the marauding Scots, or among themselves—if they could be detailed, would occupy a formidable space. Some notices of the participation which



Belfast had in the events of this long period are here introduced, and may throw a faint light on the state of society in an unsettled age.

In 1476, it is related that “a great army, led by O’Neill against the son of Hugh Boy O’Neill, attacked the Castle of Bel-feirste, which he took and demolished, and then returned to his house.”

“A.D. 1489. O’Donnell—*i.e.*, Hugh Roe, the son of Nial Garv—proceeded with an army into Trian-Chongail, in harvest-time. He committed great depredations and devastations in the Route upon MacQuillin, without receiving any injury, except that his son Con was wounded. He went from thence to Belfast, and took and demolished the Castle of Belfast; and he then returned safe to his house, loaded with immense spoils.”

“A.D. 1503. A hosting by the Earl of Kildare in this year to Magh Line and Carrickfergus, attended by the English and Irish of Leinster. He demolished the Castle of Belfast. . . .”

“A.D. 1512. An army was led by Garrett, Earl of Kildare, Lord Justice of Ireland, into Trian Chongail (Clannaboy); and he took the Castle of Belfast . . . and led the son of Niall, son of Con O’Neill, away into captivity.”

“A.D. 1537. An army was led by O’Neill (Con) into Trian Chongail (Clannaboy). He spoiled and plundered a great part of the country. The son of O’Neill, however, was taken prisoner in the rear of the army at Belfast. . . . Niall Oge, the son of Niall, son of Con O’Neill, Lord of Clannaboye, died suddenly at that time, and O’Neill returned again to Trian Chongail (Clannaboy), and obtained his son who was in captivity. Dissensions and contentions afterwards arose in Clannaboy concerning the lordship.”

“A.D. 1552. A hosting was made by the Lord Justice again into Ulster against the son of Niall Oge (*i.e.*, O’Neill) and the Scots. A party of the English and Mac an tSabhaoisigh<sup>1</sup> preceded them with a force in quest of preys; but the son of Niall Oge met these at Belfast, and he rushed on and defeated them, and slew Mac an tSabhaoisigh, together with forty or sixty others. The other troops, however, went across [the River Lagan], and proceeded to erect a castle at Belfast;<sup>2</sup> but they gained no victory, and obtained no

<sup>1</sup> The name Mac an tSabhaoisigh was Savage, of the Ards, in a very Irish form.

<sup>2</sup> Was the castle referred to in this extract a new erection? It is said there really was at one time a second castle at Belfast. No account of it, if it ever

hostages or spoils, and their spirits were greatly damped on this occasion.”<sup>1</sup>

The condition and aspect of the country at the time these last-named wars were in progress are further exhibited in the letter of an eye-witness. In 1553, Lord Chancellor Cusacke writes thus—

“The country of Clanneboye is in woods and bogs for the greatest part, wherein lieth Knockfergus, and so to the Glynnes where the Scots do inhabit. As much of this country as is near the sea is a champain country, of 20 miles in length, and not over 4 miles in breadth, or little more. The same Hugh (O'Neill) hath 2 castles, one called *Bealefarst*, an old castle standing upon a ford that leadeth from Arde to Clanneboye, which being well repaired, being now broken, would be a good defence between the woods and Knockfergus. The other, called *Castellrioughe* (Castlereagh), is four miles from *Bealefarst*, and standeth upon the plain in the midst of the woods of the Dufferin.”

This descriptive document concludes with the following words :—

“I pray you to take this my poor information in good part, which I have studied in hope that the same taking place I might serve in some stead, whereas now I serve in danger of my life, my fellow in commission, the Baron of Bruntchurch, being lately slain only for doing justice.”

Another much more interesting paper, three years later in date than the preceding, is the *Journey of the Earl of Sussex*,

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existed, has been preserved. The site of *The Castle of Belfast*, where it was first chosen, was, and is still, well known. If anything of the kind occurred, it may have been like one of those castles described by a chronicler as “Piles of small reckoning, the which be no more but Towres with narrow Loopholes, unto which adjoin Hauls (?) made of Turfes, and roufed over head with Thatch, having unto them belonging large Courtes, fenced round with Ditches and Hedges or rough Bushes for defense of their Cataille against Cowstealers.” Such is the description of a Pile. The Castle of Belfast was not of this character, but it has been alleged that where St. George's Church now is there was a castle in the early Norman times, and that the first church on the spot was built from its ruins. Any proof of such statement is unknown.

<sup>1</sup> These six extracts are all from the *Annals of the Four Masters* (O'Donovan's translation), and will be found at the years noted at the beginning of each.



Lord Deputy, to the North of Ireland. In its entirety, it throws light on the state of the country in 1556; but no part of it can be judiciously introduced, except the following extracts, which describe well-known places in our own immediate neighbourhood:—

“On Tuesday, 7th July, my Lord Deputy removed from Lisen Rie, and camped at Mahere Blarras, by a river called Venelaggan, and a church on a hill, called the Church of Blarras. And this day we came through a great pass, called Kelleultahe, being the space of two miles of length; through which pass my Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sydney, Sir Henry Wm. Fitz Williams, with the rest of the army, marched on foot, all in armour. On Wednesday, the 8th, my Lord Deputy removed from Mahere Blarras, and camped that night underneath Banne Vadegane, by Lissetolloh Arde, beyond Kellefarst. And this day we came through a pass, called Ballahlisle Clehan, a little from the church of Dromme, by a river called ——. On the hill of Banne Vadegane is a great cave, wherein is the treasure of the country of Clanneaboy, being the country of Phelim Doehe. On Thursday, the 9th, my Lord Deputy came to Knockfargus, and there he was received by the Mayor and the Bishop of Doune in the church, and service done as aforesaid. From thence he went to the Castle, and there was received with shot of guns. Then he went and camped at the hill of Aullfconnocrowhe, two miles from Knockfargus, by an abbey called the Abbey of Connocroughe, and there remained Friday and Saturday, in the country of McNelle Oge.”

The Deputy next travelled northward with his force, and the paper describes with considerable vividness his encounters with enemies, principally the Scottish M'Connells, his attempts at restoring proper peace regulations, and the general appearance of the country. After having occupied thirty-nine days in the journey, his scribe, Philip Butler, Athlone Pursuivant, whose orthography of proper names and frequent omissions are to be deplored, brings him, near its end, to our own neighbourhood again.

“On Monday night, 27th July, he removed to Banne Vaddegan, by a town called Coille, in a plain betwixt two hills, where he re-

mained till the Monday following, taking order with the gentlemen of the country, and expecting further news.”<sup>1</sup>

These extracts exhibit a curious state of society. Subjects, if they could be so called, were in unrestrained conflict with one another. The representative of the nominal Government had to appear armed to ensure any respect or act with any power;

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<sup>1</sup> These extracts would afford ample notes of explanation.

The first is but a brief extract from a most valuable paper. The part referring to Belfast has alone been copied. The whole occupies no less than thirteen pages of one of the large volumes of *State Paper Calendars* (*Carew MSS.*, 1515-1574, p. 235). It is entitled, “The Copy of the Book sent from Sir Thomas Cusake, Lord Chancellor of Ireland, to the Duke of Northumberland’s Grace for the present state of Ireland.” The paper describes the condition and appearance of Ireland, and enters more at large into the state of Ulster than its then importance would seem to have demanded.

The second is also a most interesting and striking narrative, and contained in the same volume as the preceeding, p. 257. It is an account of one of several progresses of the Earl of Sussex, the Lord Deputy in the reign of Philip and Mary, relating his journey from its commencement at Dublin until his return. Much of it refers specially to the county of Antrim, and the identification of the numerous places named would test the ingenuity of those best acquainted with the several localities. Most of those close to Belfast can be traced. Blarras, it may be presumed, is Blaris of modern days; Venelaggan is probably the Lagan, but, if so, what the prefix means is difficult to guess; Kelleultaghe is Killultagh; Banne Vadegan is the Cave Hill, almost close to the town of Belfast. There is no modern townland name in the same place called Lissetolloh Arde, but in the *Chichester Patent* there is Tollard and Ballylistytollard, one of which was the place referred to. Kellefast, of course, means Belfast—an orthographical error of the scribe—but no further mention is made of the place throughout the document, an evidence that it was not a very lively or attractive spot. The notice of the well-known cave on Banne Vadegane, with the relation accompanying it, cannot but interest. Did the O’Neill keep any treasure in this place, or did the scribe relate the idle tales he heard? This spot, in the old time, was noted and remarkable—the fort constructed by an O’Neill, named, it is likely, Brian Mac Art; the cave, a secure place for treasure, if need were, or more probably for property of bulky character; the peaceful scenery around in 1556; the noble prospect, when no smoke, either on land or water, darkened the sky—when no town lay on the level plain beneath—when the thousand marks of modern civilisation were all unknown, made it, there is every reason to think, a favourite resort of O’Neill, the lord and owner, either in his own person or that of his relatives, of all within sight, and miles beyond and around on every side.

The conclusion of the paper is probably the most remarkable part of it all. The Earl of Sussex was accompanied on this occasion, not only by Sir Henry Sydney, but by the Earl of Ormond, the Lord Delven, Lord Howth, the Baron of “Dounkenan,” Sir George Stanley, and other persons of distinction. In fact, the head of the State, with his captains, his advisers, and a considerable force,

and when the pressure was removed, "war and making preys" again became the customary rule. Still, the Government must have been, in a reluctant and independent kind of way, more or less recognised; tribute, if not given, was at least said to be due; territories in actual possession of others were still treated as Crown possessions. The Government, however weak and distant, and to a great extent powerless, so far as Ulster was concerned, was frequently appealed to for grants and privileges. Thus, in 1542, the Lord Deputy advised a grant of Clannaboye to Neill Connelagh O'Neill,<sup>1</sup> reserving only for the Crown Carrickfergus, Olderfleet, and Coleraine; and yet so valueless were such recommendations that in the very next year the same Lord Deputy granted it to Sir John Travers,<sup>2</sup> who, in the confusion and disputed claims around, had no power to take possession of the country or to derive any benefit from it. Belfast is not mentioned as a reserved place or otherwise in this grant, being too insignificant to be worthy of notice, and was still but

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established the Government for a week, betwixt two hills, by a town called Coille, taking order with the gentlemen of the country, and transacting the ordinary business devolving upon him and his council. This took place at Coille (Coole), the modern Carnmoney; the two hills were Banne Vadegan and Carnmoney Hill; and the army was encamped, the councils held, probably above Greencastle, about three miles from Belfast.

An addition to the part of this note referring to the Cave Hill is necessary here. So recently as March 7, 1874, in the *Belfast News-Letter* of that date, there is a most interesting account of two more caves, besides the three generally described as the full complement which the hill contained. These newly-discovered caves are extremely difficult of access, and are larger than any of the others, one of them being no less than thirty feet long by twenty broad, ten feet high, and perfectly dry. On the wall or rock of the other a name is cut, but strangely omitted, proving that it had been visited before; and both the exploration and the account of it are very creditable to the performer of both. The discovery of these caves opens up the question, whether the O'Neills in the old days might not also have been aware of their existence, and have actually used them for some such purpose as the chronicler of Lord Sussex records.

<sup>1</sup> This O'Neill was nephew of the Earl of Tyrone, and father of Turlough Lynagh, who was, in the next generation, a powerful opponent of the English Government, and became or claimed to be considered "The O'Neill" after the death of Shane.

<sup>2</sup> Sir John Travers was Master-General of the Ordnance in Ireland. His name often appears subsequently in the *State Papers*, but not in connection with Clannaboye, which must have been to him a useless gift.

“an old castle on the ford leading from Arde to Clanneboye,” as Cusacke described it. It was possessed by Sir James Croft, the Lord Deputy, in 1551; and it is mentioned, as one of his special services, that he repaired it and placed a garrison in it.<sup>1</sup> It was re-granted to O'Neill, probably in tenantable condition, by Edward the Sixth, in 1552, on the submission of Hugh, son of Nelan Juvenis, in these words<sup>2</sup>—“We grant his petition for the Castle of Belferside, to be restored to him in the same state as when he first possessed it.” Thus was Hugh O'Neill formally made chief of the Castle and country by a grant from the King of England.

The Castle would appear to have had hitherto no long-continued ownership, nor did disruptions cease with Hugh O'Neill's possession. The troubled times forbade; and though many wise suggestions were made by different chief governors as to the better administration of justice, the making of Clannaboye and other places into shire ground, the curbing of the Scots, even the introduction of schools—these, and other propositions, were necessarily suspended till a future day, the materials for such purposes being as yet too discordant and intractable.

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<sup>1</sup> This information regarding Sir James Croft's laying hold of the Castle of Belfast will be found in *Notes and Queries*, May 16th, 1868, p. 457, from a manuscript *History of the Chief Governors of Ireland*. The same is mentioned elsewhere.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*, Carew, 1515–1574, p. 234. The article is entitled, “The Submission of Hugh, son of Nelan Juvenis.” He submits to the clemency of the king, repenting of the war he had waged against him, and supplicates pardon, which was granted. The devastated monasteries within his country were granted to him with their lands at rents. He undertakes to forfeit his *captaincy*, his lands, flocks, goods, and farms, if he ever rebels again; and having entered into all these obligations, and received all these favours, the Castle of Belfast is restored to him by the Crown, as mentioned in the text, “as when he first possessed it.”

## CHAPTER II.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

A POPULAR historian has said that with the reign of Elizabeth commences the true era of modern Irish history. The materials certainly increase with the advance of time, and the interest which the narrative excites should be greater to ordinary investigators than at any earlier period. We have seen in the preceding chapter what imperfect relations subsisted between the governing body and the presumed owners or possessors of the country. Such relations, involving a condition of doubt and uncertainty, could not but lead to constant difficulties. Even in that comparatively rude age, this absence of undisputed ownership must have forcibly occurred to all the parties interested; and nearly at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign, a discussion or argument appears in the *State Papers* trying to disentangle it.<sup>1</sup> Shane O'Neill or his representative is one of the reasoners. The line of argument adopted cannot be followed; but, singularly enough, Belfast is introduced in illustration of this national, or at least provincial controversy, the statement being that, though O'Neill claimed supremacy over the subordinate chiefs of his name, yet the castles of Carrickfergus and Belfast were at that very time in quiet possession of the Queen, though in "Clandebuy," which O'Neill declared to be subject unto him. The semi-legal arguments between O'Neill and Sir George Carew are rather interesting. It is sufficient to say that the Queen claimed, in right of her Earldom of Ulster, the power of granting the lands comprised within it to whom she liked; and the controversy proves this point, that the ownership of the Castle of Belfast had passed at this very

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<sup>1</sup> *Carew Papers*, 1515-1574, p. 304.

time into her hands. The power so expressed had not yet been practically exercised; the lands, at least of Clannaboye, were still the lands of an O'Neill, and of one whose fate and fortunes are so connected with the early years of the great queen's reign in this locality, and whose career is so entwined with our subject, that it must be entered into at some length, being, indeed, the history of Belfast for several years. This was Brian M'Phelim O'Neill, who found himself, or deemed himself, owner thereof and of Clannaboye when Elizabeth ascended the throne.

If a settled Government had existed at that time, he would have been acknowledged the true owner of Belfast and all its surroundings; owner, possibly, in right of his very remote ancestors, and certainly in right of conquest by his more immediate predecessors after the death of William De Burgo more than two hundred years before.<sup>1</sup> His position the Government of the day fully acknowledged. He often professed fealty and subordination to it, and it is said, on fair evidence, that such was caused on account of the support he received from the nominal ruling powers in opposition to those of his elder brother and his uncle, whose claims were superior, according, at least, to English law. Brian had possibly been elected by Tanistry, by the choice of the O'Neills, seated on his regal chair at Castlereagh. At any rate, he was for the time the head of the Clannaboy O'Neills, and possessed 30,000 beeves, and other flocks and herds innumerable. In 1563 he visited or joined the Earl of Sussex, the Lord Deputy, at Armagh, with a train of thirty horsemen and one hundred footmen;<sup>2</sup> he was knighted by Sir Henry Sidney, at Carrickfergus, in 1567,

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<sup>1</sup> "Camden asserts that Sir Brian usurped Clannaboy; but this, which is a mere fiction of the English law, is not true, for his ancestors had possession of it for at least two centuries, and Brian was the true heir."—Note by Dr. O'Donovan in *Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. v., p. 1676. Camden, notwithstanding this positive contradiction on the part of a writer so well acquainted with the subject, is, as will appear in the sequel, partly right; but the usurpation was more in the way of a family quarrel than a forcible detention of the territory by another not connected with the race. It does not affect the general statement of Sir Brian being the public and recognised owner of Clannaboy at this time.

<sup>2</sup> *Carew MSS.*, 1515-1574, p. 350.



and must have maintained frequent intercourse with that eminent man; one of his ancestors was described long before as almost as great a man of strength as the Tyrone O'Neill himself; and it is not probable that Clannaboy lost any of its influence or power in the person of the present lord. In spite of all this fair seeming, jealousies, doubts, and disputes, both with relatives and the Government, were not extinguished. In the interesting record<sup>1</sup> which Sir Henry Sidney has left behind him of his proceedings in Ireland during the several times in which he held the office of chief governor, he informs us how he endeavoured to allay the dissensions which prevailed, and, among his other services, that he had placed a garrison in Belfast under that renowned soldier, Captain Malbie. This is either like a joint possession with Sir Brian,<sup>2</sup> or possibly a protective proceeding in his favour on the part of Sidney. It proves, however, a degree of unsettledness; and with the view of placing their relations on a more fixed footing, and at the same time of increasing the security and improvement of the country, a meeting was held at Belfast, in October, 1568, between the parties whose names are introduced in the following agreement. Sir Henry Sidney, as Lord Deputy, must have been frequently in Belfast and have

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<sup>1</sup> *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. iii., p. 33.

<sup>2</sup> The connection seems rather difficult of explanation, as the following extracts, all referring to the month of February, 1568, will show:—"We have fortified Belfast, and have placed there XV horsemen, so that in this town (Carrickfergus) we live as quietly as in Dublin."—Hamilton's *Calendar of State Papers*, 1509–1573, p. 363. This is in a letter from Carrickfergus, sent by Captain Pers (*sic*) and Captain Malbie to the Lords Justices. Malbie's position was not a very enviable one. They write on: "Belfast. Malbie is impoverished by this service; his soldiers are in misery; they cannot live on their entertainment; Brian Carragh keeps aloof, and is ruled by Sir Brian M'Phelim; his *Kyriats* be much come over this side the Bann. I mind to talk with him in that your Honours commanded us, and will plead possession, and that shortly which your Honours shall hear of." There was, from this, a dispute about the Castle of Belfast. Further on, Malbie says of it,—"*Bellfarste*, which also cost me dear the building." This last remark refers to his fortifying of Belfast, probably nothing more than repairing or strengthening the castle for the fifteen horsemen. His pleading of possession indicates the unsettled times, and the whole shadows forth the impending agreement between Sir Henry Sidney and O'Neill which took effect a few months after.

known the place, but he now visited it apparently with every inclination to come to a final arrangement, and be at friendship with Sir Brian O'Neill.

“Articles betwixt the Right Honourable Sir Henry Sidney, Knight of the most noble order, Lord President of the Marches of Wales, and Lord Deputy of Ireland, on the one part, and Sir Brian M'Phelim *Bacco* and Brian *Caro* on the other part, to be observed and performed on [by] the parties and behalf of the said Sir Brian and Brian [*Caro*], covenanted and agreed upon the 8th day of October in the year of the reign of our most dread Sovereign Lady Elizabeth the Tenth; and the same articles to take effect upon the delivery of the Castle or Manor of Belfast out of their hands and possession.

“Imprimis. The said Sir Brian M'Phelim and Brian Caro do covenant, grant, condescend, and agree upon; and either of them covenanteth and granteth to and with the said Sir Henry Sidney, Knight, that they forthwith shall make, or cause to be made, a good and sufficient bridge, that men, horse, drag, cart, and wayne, with all manner of carriage, may safely pass and repass over and through the same in some convenient place over the Ford at Belfast, with causes, and erche (arch) end of the said bridge.

“Item. They do further covenant to cut, or cause to be cut and hewn down, the passes and highway in and through the wood as far as Kilwarlin, containing in breadth one hundred feet.

“Item. That they shall harbour and lodge with meat and drink, for one night, any soldier or messenger, for his horse and himself, having occasion to travel by them; and that they shall, with aid, conduct any messenger, carriage, and soldier from Belfast to Dromore, and from Belfast to Knockfergus.

“Item. They and either of them do further covenant and grant to defend all artificers working or framing of Timber in any of the Woods there, and any other that shall be appointed to furnish the Town of Knockfergus, the Surveyor of the Victuals, the Surveyor of the Works, and all other the Queen's Majesty's Officers from time to time with wood.

“Item. They do further covenant to cut, or cause to be cut, so much wood for the burning of the brick at Knockfergus as shall be appointed by John Bedowe, and the same to bring or cause to be brought to the water-side in a readiness to be put into the Boat or Boats prepared for carriages thereof, taking for the cutting and carrying of the same woods the accustomed rates and prices.



“Item. They do likewise covenant and agree that they and either of them shall defend from spoil and burning all ships, boats, and other vessels which shall be from time to time sent thither to be builded, moored (moored?), or rigged, or that for any other purpose shall be remaining there.

“Item. They do covenant that before they enter into the possession of the said Castle or Manor of Belfast, they shall enter into sufficient band or bandes to Captain Malbie that they shall satisfy him for all such sums as he hath disbursed there, and for such hay and other provisions as he hath there, according as the same shall be affirmed by the now Constable of Belfast aforesaid.



“This is Brian’s Mark in the  
Presence of William Peers.

Copia vera Examinata—Ed. Waterhouse.

per me, Ed. Molenaux.

(In Dorso.) The Copy of Sir Brian M’Phelym’s  
Indenture touching Belfast.”

This agreement indicates friendship and a good understanding on both sides. Sir Brian is reinstated in the castle of his ancestors on a firmer tenure than his former uncertain ownership. For this he covenants to protect the Queen’s soldiers in their progress through the country, and to facilitate all the measures that might be thought desirable for its peace and progress. He became the Queen’s captain, paying some tribute in acknowledgment of her sovereignty. He had received letters of thanks a short time before, “acknowledging his loyalty in the advancement of the service against Shane O’Neill.”<sup>1</sup> “Hugh M’Felim and Con M’Neill Oge,” his uncle and his brother, “were in ward at Knockfergus,” while “countenance was to be given to Sir Brian M’Felim, a true subject.” Such is the language of the *State Papers*, proving the position which the owner of Belfast

<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers*, Hamilton’s, 1509–1573, p. 340.

This original document, above quoted, is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, and is marked *S.P.O. Ireland*, vol. xxvi., art. 5; but no comment or remark is made on it. It cannot but cause much inquiry and speculation, and the most prominent points requiring explanation are here noticed.

*Bacco* should be *Backagh*, *i.e.*, lame, or halting. Not that the person so called was either, but that an ancestor had received that cognomen, possibly from the

now occupied. The castle, as has been shown, had been fortified while in Malbie's possession. All difficulties were now, apparently, settled by this fixed and amicable agreement with O'Neill. The suspicions against him of a few months before were at an end, and he was at this date the friend of the English Government, and possessing his estates, Belfast included, something after the manner of a perpetual grant.

To decide with which party lay the fault which disturbed these happy relations may depend on individual prepossessions. The Englishman may have thought that something better might be done than have the country occupied by the "60,000 horns" of Sir Brian O'Neill, and by wandering "creaghts" living, Arab fashion, among the beautiful glens and plains of Clannaboye. It was seen to be the germ of a goodly territory, in an unsettled state, or owned by those who were in their estimation improvident, and never to be gained over to settled and industrious habits. The Queen's double right, first to the sovereignty of all

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fact, and that it was continued to his descendants, a practice still common among the Irish.

*Caro* should be Carragh, or speckled, probably derived in a similar manner from a distant source.

The notice of the building of a bridge over the Lagan at this distant time, more than a century before it took effect, is noteworthy. The expressions would appear to favour the idea that arches at the ends only were to be made, with an intervening connection probably of wood. The word "causes" refers to "causeways" covering the whole bridge or the approaches to it. The language, however, is obscure. It was not a bridge in the modern meaning of the term, but rather an improvement, enlargement, or strengthening of the ford, or the construction of a new one.

The clause representing protection to be given to all ships or boats to be "buiilded" or repaired *there* indicates Belfast, or some other spot on the Lagan suitable for such purpose.

It is worth observing the proof which this document affords of the fact that Sir Brian O'Neill, the most important man in the country, a knight of high degree, dealing on the spot with the Lord Deputy, could not write his name. A curious contradiction to this is afforded by one of the many valuable contributions of the late Mr. Hore to the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. ii., p. 1; in which, referring to 1572—four years after the above agreement—he gives a *fac-simile* copy of Sir Brian's signature among those of many other famous Irish chiefs, and it seems to be nearly about the best of the entire. Mr. Hore must have been mistaken, as there are numerous papers and letters of Sir Brian extant in which his mark occurs.

the country, and then to the Earldom of Ulster, as a kind of individual possession, must have entered into the calculations of the adventurers who were now coming here, and promulgating their "devices" and "plots" for Irish reformation. Thus, besides Sir John Travers, who had disappeared, Sir Thomas Gerrard and companions, in 1570, offered to *plant* the Glynnnes and Clannaboye if they were granted 100 horse and 400 foot till the three first crops would be gathered; to have, besides, some of the Queen's ships for defence against the Scots, and a commission to raise soldiers, labourers, and artificers in England in furtherance of their scheme. Then, again, two English captains, Brown and Borrowe, modestly petitioned the Queen "for the Arde, from the mouth of the river of Strangford to the river of Belfast."<sup>1</sup> This proposal gave rise to considerable correspondence, of which the following are examples, signed by Brown

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, 1509-1573, p. 462.

These two captains, Browne and Borrowe, were very pertinacious men, and the unconcerned manner in which they speak of disposing of Sir Brian O'Neill's territory is very characteristic of the period. They had a great desire to get hold of Castlereagh, and, as an additional reason for dispossessing O'Neill, write—"But further to the matter, it is most necessary to have Castle Rewghe out of his hands, and so to put him over the water into Clandeboye, and to make head within the woods if it were possible at the first, or at the least at the skirt of the wood, because within these woods the (are?) harboured the Slott Neiles, the Mack Neale Oges, the henry highs, and Mack brian Carto, & 1111 Septes of the Kellys, as Patrick M'Neill O'Kelly, M'Morito ne Kelly, Gildough M'Donough O'Kelly, and Neil M'Patrick O'Kelly, all which are Wood Kerne and outlaws, and do foster Scotts; and besides this, necessity enforceth to require to have the woods, because without we shall have no timber to build withal nor wood to burn. Reasonable for some orders for a Seneschall of Down to inhabit the country." This last sentence is somewhat unintelligible. The Irish names sadly puzzled the English captains, their orthography thereof being of the worst. They must have had other matters on hand likewise, as they say in a detached letter, nearly devoid of meaning, but containing an Elizabethan proverb—"And touching the license for wool and tallow, it is but, as it were, to take out the ladle and put into the pot, as it will not bear the charge of building."—*Browne and Borrowe*, 1571.

These adventurous captains may really have got hold, for a time at least, of Castlereagh, as in Thomas Smith's arguments in favour of his bold exploit for conquering Clannaboye and the Ards, and to prove how easy it would be for a small body of resolute soldiers to defend themselves against a host, he writes—"And the Ards itself, where Goodrich, Capteine Barrow's Lieutenant, with

and Borrowe in their joint capacity. They state, to show the necessity of a new system being introduced—

“That the Castle of Carrickfergus cost £20,000, and now your Majesty hath not a penny rent without the town, nor they of the town assurance of their lives a good mile without the town, nor the people of that country assurance of their goods from spoiling, if any enemies shall arise against them; neither has your Majesty’s Deputy, at his coming into the country, any relief of house or harbour, but only the grass on the ground, saving only the town of Knockfergus; and the reason is because no civil man do sit down in the country.”

Of Sir Brian they write thus—

“And if it shall be said that if Castlereagh were taken from Sir Brian M’Phelim it would perhaps offend him, and be an occasion to make him rebel, it is to be answered, that the offending of him in this case is not to be respected, for neither he nor any other Irishman but will be offended to see an Englishman in his country, much more to see him sit down there; but yet to answer it more fully, the custody of Castlereagh was put into his hands but since the captivity of Con M’Neile Oge, and was never before in any of the Mack Phelim’s hands, but always in Mack Neale Oge’s hands; neither had they ever any Pile on that side the water, and therefore it may with more reason be taken from him.”

While these speculators were making such proposals,<sup>1</sup> desiring to send Sir Brian to the Belfast or County Antrim side and to despoil him of his possessions, the ink, as we say in modern parlance, was yet scarcely dry on the formal agreement, made between the great Irish chief, of whom they write so disrespectfully, and Sir Henry Sidney, the Queen’s Lord Deputy, one of the most able and upright of his class.

Sir Brian had done nothing to lessen his estimation with the Government, or to break the engagement which he had

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fourteen men, kept and defended the castle called Castle Reau, and went daily one quarter of a mile to fetch his water, against five hundred that lay daily upon him.” Borrowe is the spelling of the name in the original, but Barrowe is that used by Smith, so that it may reasonably be thought that they were identical.

<sup>1</sup> Their letters are among the *Pinkerton MSS.*, but are all extracted from the *State Papers*.

entered into in October, 1568. So far from that, for the two or three years following, his name frequently occurs in favourable colours.

In March, 1569, it is stated—

“A piece of great good service done by Capt. Pers, Capt. Cheston, Robert Holmes, and the horse under Capt. Basenett, in overthrowing 400 Scots with certain Irish near to a castle in Claneboy of Sir Brian M’Felim’s, called Castlereagh, being from Knockfergus in the way towards Dublin about ten miles, and three miles or thereabouts from Belfast.”<sup>1</sup>

This only exhibits Sir Brian’s inability, alone, to maintain the quiet of the country. Shane O’Neill had passed away, but another O’Neill reigned in his stead, to whom the co-operation of Sir Brian would have been acceptable, if he could have obtained it; and in August of this same year, while other Irish chiefs are mentioned as participating or sympathising with Turlough Lynnagh, it is said, “he threatens Sir Brian,” leaving it to be inferred that the fealty of the latter was still untarnished.<sup>2</sup>

But the toils were gathering around him. None of the offers of the projectors who had cast wistful eyes on his inheritance were accepted; at last they finally took effect in favour of Sir Thomas Smith and his son Thomas, to whom—by strict indenture, bearing date 16th November, 1571—Queen Elizabeth granted the Castle of Belfast, other castles, and dissolved abbeys and great lands in Antrim and Down. Sir Thomas Smith was Secretary of State, scholar, author, of great learning, and of high

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar State Papers*, 1569–1573, p. 403.

<sup>2</sup> In addition to these proofs of Sir Brian’s integrity, he had himself stated that Turlough Lynnagh had offered to cede to him the half of his possessions if he would unite with him against the English; and in that recapitulation of the great losses “the poor inhabitants of Knockfergus” had suffered from the time of Henry the Eighth, they mention, as one of the number of their casualties, that “Con M’Neyle Oge placed 200 men by night in the middle of the Town to kill Sir Brian M’Fellomy and then to win the town.” This is a farther evidence of Sir Brian’s position, and of his intimate union with Carrickfergus and the English Government. For this most curious narrative from Carrickfergus see *State Papers*, Carew, 1575–1588, p. 146.

repute. His motive for taking part in an enterprise so foreign to all his previous pursuits was to provide for Thomas, his natural son, who, instead of going with Drake to the Spanish main to seek for gold, thought he might find it nearer home in the unknown regions of Clannaboye and the Ards. The letters patent were passed.<sup>1</sup> The Smiths, *on parchment*, became now the owners of Belfast, and for some time events occurred of great interest, and closely interwoven with the history of this immediate locality. These things could not happen without coming to the knowledge of Sir Brian, whom they so nearly concerned. Accordingly, from Belfast he addressed the following letter to the Queen. It does not mention Smith's name. It was before any overt act had taken place on the part of the latter, and was written by O'Neill, in consequence of the rumours which he had heard, to obtain a fixed security of his great possessions. Smith's project was rather discountenanced by persons of influence in Ireland, or, at least, considered of doubtful efficacy, so far as such could be done without giving offence to the Queen, or running counter to any of her favourite projects, of which this was one. The letter begins—

“MOST GRACIOUS PRINCE,

“Although I am one of the meanest of your Highnesses subjects, yet the great favour of your Majesty to all men, and especially the most excellent and princelike bounty to me extended as well by divers and sundry benefits as the present sent from your Grace unto me by Captain Piers, Seneschal in these parts, so emboldeneth my debility that I presume to beseech your Highness as well to consider of mine estate, as also the bounden duty and faithful loyalty the which to your Highness I have always performed. And there withal the weakness of the country and double strength of the enemy, which happening as well by the malicious minded of your Grace's disloyal subjects (who<sup>ere</sup> at what time for the lessening of the great charges wherewith your Majesty is here burdened, your Grace

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<sup>1</sup> Smith went to the expense of having the grant illuminated in colours, with a miniature of Queen Elizabeth in the letter E of her name. It was sold by auction a few years ago in London, and by reason of the illumination fetched a high price.—*Pinkerton MSS.*



doth maintain the garrison of soldiers here lying) do take present opportunity of their *pretured* (?) malice to rebel, and so work out all that hath been established before to your Grace's great expenses. And also through the intrusion of the Irish Scots into these parts, what are cause of the chief disquiet and disturbance in the same. For redress whereof, if it may please your Majesty to confirm the lands of old belonging to mine ancestors Lords of Clandeboyne, as well on the other side the river of Bann as on this side, unto me and mine heirs as your Grace's gift, I will not only pay unto your highness all such rents or other rights as it shall please your Majesty to impose upon me, but also take upon me by the said serviceable device and counsel, that whereas your Highnesses predecessors, as also your Majesty, have been continually burdened with excessive charges for the reducing of these parts to due subjection, in a short time not only lessen the said expenses, but also utterly to disburden your Majesty of the same for the accomplishment whereof as I am most willing to follow the said serviceable devise and counsel, so if it may please your Grace to accept the same I trust to do such service to your highness as your Grace shall not have cause to think the gift of these lands evil bestowed on me, whereof I trust your majesty may be void of suspicion, considering how from my youth hitherto I have always continued loyal and faithful, what time I have been both banished the country by the rebels and driven to great misery, as those as were your Grace's deputies here I trust can declare. Thus I am bold to write to your highness remaining a daily orator for your Grace's pleasure.

"From Belfast, this 6th July, 1571,

"Your Majesty's humble subject,

"BRIAN — M'PHELM." <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This long letter is copied exactly as it is in the *Pinkerton MSS.* The sentences are very unconnected, and the language inaccurate or incoherent, though the general meaning is easily enough understood. It might be made the subject of very lengthened comments. The Captain Piers mentioned in it was a person of very considerable importance in the country for several years. He favoured Sir Brian, and was connected with him by some tie, either of relationship or otherwise. He was Seneschal "in these parts," according to Sir Brian; Governor of Carrickfergus, according to the history of that town, of which his son, William Piers, jun., was mayor in 1574 and 1575. The elder Piers had done good service during the early part of the Queen's reign, and was thought to be high in her favour. His motive for befriending Sir Brian, if pure and disinterested, is creditable to him; but it is conjectured he had an eye to the grazing of his own flocks, on easy terms, on Sir Brian's lands around Carrickfergus and Belfast, and was rather ruffled at the thoughts of Smith and his followers

To befriend Sir Brian, Captain William Piers writes the following letter to his "Most Soverayne Prince":—

"Although nature bindeth me to believe in your service here as a true and faithful subject to your Majesty, yet the princely liberality and favourable countenance used towards me divers times, and especially at my last repair to your Grace, doth much more embolden me for want of power or ability to recompense the least of your Highnesses benefit bestowed on me. May it please your Highness, that I have conferred with Sir Brian M'Phelim, Knight, who is captain of this country, appointed by the Lord Deputy, and as yet hath continued at all times a loyal and true subject, and is conformable to do any thing wherein he is or shall be advised for your Grace's service. And therefore, if it might seem good to your Majesty to send hither 250 footmen and 50 horsemen over and above those which are already here, and to be at charge with them but for one year, I have taken order with the gentlemen of these parts, that one year being expired, they shall at their own cost bear the one-half of the charge belonging to the said soldiers, and after three years that they shall continue here, disburthen your Grace of any manner of charge for them; and, besides, to plant the said soldiers or others that shall be here in this country, and to furnish them with kine at a reasonable price, as they shall be well able to manure and inhabit the country, whereby your Majesty will be not only greatly strengthened, but also the people reduced to civility, the Irish Scots, who are the greatest destroyers of this commonwealth, and the encouragers of the chief rebels in this realm, banished.

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depriving him of these advantages. Another part of the letter represents Piers in rather an unfavourable light in one particular. He was, however, the chosen bearer of a present from the Queen herself to Sir Brian. It is a pity he or Sir Brian did not mention what this present was. Gifts to Irish chiefs are frequently alluded to in the *State Papers*: in one place £100 to buy cups for that purpose, a favourite kind of gift to the present day; scarlet cloth and rings are also presented, and several other articles; while hawks, hounds, horses (hobbeys, sometimes called), &c., for which Ireland was presumed to be famous, are frequently sent by persons of station here to friends in England.

The involved sentence within brackets in the letter would favour the idea that the Queen had a small garrison in Belfast in conjunction with Sir Brian's force, and that all were in perfect accord.

The claims Sir Brian makes are very extensive. His lands beyond the Bann are out of consideration here; but there is no doubt that they, as well as those more firmly held by him in County Antrim, were all the patrimony of his ancestors.



"And whereas the said Sir Brian hath written to your Majesty to confirm unto him and his servants the ancient lands of Clandeboy, as well on this side the Bann as on the other side; it was no matter of great importance to grant the same by 'lre or concordatum,' or otherwise, considering that if your Grace do not go forward with a general conquest it will greatly encourage him to serve, and, besides, having no heirs lawfully begotten<sup>1</sup> (as the tenor of the gift may run), the lands, notwithstanding, continue as before always at your Grace's devotion for the . . . also he is willing to pay such a rent as your Highness shall impose."

Sir Brian now writes another letter, as the agreement with respect to the Smiths had fully, by this time, come to his knowledge. This communication is to the Lord Deputy and Council in Ireland, and is a firm expostulation as to his treatment in being deprived, unjustly and without inquiry, of possessions which had so long been owned by his ancestors. He names the Smiths in it, and seems fully cognisant of the entire proceedings. This letter is as follows:—

"MY SINGULAR GOOD LORDS,

"For that the times have been and are so troublesome in these parts, as although my desire is great to present myself before our most sovereign prince the Queen's Majesty and your honours, yet foreseeing what danger was imminent to the country in my absence I could not find convenient time to leave the same. But lest I

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<sup>1</sup> Now why did Piers say this? It was an untruth, according to the statements of modern writers, and was worse than the falsification of a *State Paper*, inasmuch as it was in a letter to the Queen herself from one of her most trusted servants. Sir Brian was twice married, the father of his second wife being that Brian Carragh who was also an O'Neill, and whom we have seen associated with him in the agreement in Belfast in 1568. His first wife was daughter of Sir Arthur Magennis, Viscount Iveagh.—*Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. v., p. 1678. This, at least, is the account given by Dr. O'Donovan at the place referred to. It may be incorrect, as, according to the Rev. Mr. Hill (*The MacDonnells of Antrim*, p. 289), the intermarriages above noted referred to Sir Brian M'Phelim O'Neill's eldest son, and not to himself. In any case the allusion to Sir Brian's matrimonial position on the part of Piers was covert and ungenerous, and the loophole he suggests to break the agreement, if necessary, disingenuous, or worse. He left two sons, Shane MacBrian and Con MacBrian, who were in after days known and acknowledged as his heirs and representatives, and succeeded to parts of his vast possessions.

should be thought altogether to neglect my duty, I have sent these my most humble letters to your Lordships—in like sort beseeching your Honours to accept the same in good part as a sign of my dutiful good zeal borne to my most Sovereign Queen and your Lordships. And further to assure your Lordships that as I have ever since my youth continued in all miseries immoveable from my loyal duty towards my said Sovereign Lady, so will I undoubtedly persevere in the same during my life. And whereas there have been certain books spread in print that it hath pleased the Queen's highness to give unto Sir Thomas Smith Knight and Thomas Smith his son, some part of the country, the which hath been possessed by my ancestors above fourteen descents to their inheritance, namely, Clandeboye. I beseech your Lordships that as my only trust is in your Honours, and I trust such as have been Governors here can certify of my true and faithful service always since my childhood, I may in consideration thereof be suffered to enjoy the government of that which I have hitherto with great danger of life, loss of men and cattle, defended and kept to her Graces use, than any other to whom it hath at no time appertained. And for my part as I do accompt myself but a Captain over this her highnesses land and country, so I doubt not but the same shall be kept always to her Majesty's devotion. I am bold to move this through the great hope that I have in your Lordships favourable and prudent consideration of my former doing. And so committing my whole cause to your Honours I most humbly take my leave beseeching the Almighty to preserve your Lordships with continual increase of honours.

"BRIAN O'NEIL M'PHELM Bacho.

"FROM KNOCKFERGUS, 27th March, 1572."

The same day on which Sir Brian wrote the preceding letter to the Irish Government he addressed another to the Queen, this time in Latin, to render it more imposing, and written, it is pretty certain, by his chaplain or some other ecclesiastic. Its tenor is quite similar; and in both a good case is made out in his favour. They were disregarded. Smith's grant could not now be recalled. The consequences appear in numerous notices. Captain Piers informs the Lord Deputy "that the country is in an uproar at the news of Mr. Smith coming to plant in the North."<sup>1</sup> The Lord Deputy himself declares, in a letter to

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers, 1509-1573*, p. 466.

Burghley, "that Mr. Smith's grant will bring the Irish into a knot to rebel."<sup>1</sup> Thomas Smith also addresses Sir Brian from London, in May, 1572, informing the latter "that he will soon come to live near him as a good neighbour, and trusts they will be on friendly terms."<sup>2</sup> Captain Piers writes to Captain Malbie (June 27, 1572) from Carrickfergus, "that he must come to him with as many horsemen as he can, for Turlough Lynagh, Sorley Boy, and all the Scots are coming upon Sir Brian, now in this town with his *creaghts*."<sup>3</sup> The Queen answers Sir Brian's letter, *comforting* him. It is to be feared they were but words in the air, though Sir Brian received her communication in good part. Smith reached the land of promise at last, having arrived at Strangford on 31st August, 1572. Sir Brian, in answer to his friendly advances, gave him to understand that "he did not intend to part with one foot of his land."

Thomas Smith acquaints the Irish Privy Council with his arrival, and the unfavourable impression it had produced on the mind of Sir Brian O'Neill. He says—"After resting two or three days at Strangford I took my voyage to Knockfergus, hoping to have some friendly composition with him . . . but he would not by any means be brought to speak with me." He says he is now hastening to the Lord Deputy, "by whom sometimes he, Sir Brian, will be guided. What will follow here I cannot yet see, but as occasion serveth from time to time, according to my duty, I will advise your Lordships."

Thomas Smith's force was ludicrously small for so great an enterprise. The feeling respecting it in different quarters, from the highest to the lowest, is detailed in the following letters—sometimes abbreviated, and though rather unconnected, the progress of the marvellous attempt will be easily understood from their perusal.

The Lord Deputy writes to the Queen, 25th September 1572 :—

"Thomas Smith is now at the length come to the Ardes. He came

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers*, 1509–1573 p. 467.    <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 472.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 474.

to me the 16th of this present. I wish his number as were able to help, and not such as shall need help; for if it be a full hundred it is not many more. Here I humbly crave pardon to answer for my dutiful meaning which your Majesty's letters gave me cause to doubt to have been misconceived. The advertisements I send were such as I received, not thereby misliking or dissuading the enterprise but the report thereof, whereof I conceived might grow those dangers that yet may grow, whether in duty I was bound to warn. God is my witness, as I feared the events of the bruits (being acquainted with the jealous nature of this people), so my heart ever doth and shall inwardly embrace the enterprise as the only means I know, without your Majesty's charge, to bridle this rebellious people, whom nothing but fear and force can teach duty and obedience. Albeit I was neither from your Majesty's Council imparted with any such determination, yet did I and still do wish 100 landed *unbruted* than 200 *bruted*. And therefore according to my duty, your Majesty's will, signified by your gracious letters, shall be accomplished by any directions, countenance, support, or aid that I may give Mr. Smith, who, finding his force too weak, is content discreetly to pass over this winter with communications, and as he shall the next spring find himself enabled so to step further forward on his enterprise."

On the same day the Lord Deputy thus writes to Burghley:—

"I would to God Mr. Smith had come without any words with a sufficient force able to have bearded them. So had his coming been of as great purpose, as the report thereof hath bred, and I fear will breed trouble. For he that thinketh that there is better dealing with an Irishman, that weigheth not his word or promise, no other than with feat force, shall find himself deceived; and yet do I use this toilsome *Premium Imperium* as well as I can, commanding, intreating, praying, and practising all I may, day and night, whereby I have stayed great extremities, and will still as I can."

Captain Piers also, one of the moving actors in this embroilment, had written a considerable time before—namely, in January, 1572—to the Lord Deputy, that when the news of Smith's proceedings

"Came to the ears of Sir Brian and others, I, considering what great inconvenience was like to grow by publishing thereof, as your Lordship doth know the nature of the Irish is such, or rather that

they would have the country to be altogether waste than any man but themselves to inhabit, and how contrary it is to their natures, which have a long time, as it were, lived without subjection, to become subject, have devised the best I may to quench that imminent fire, and so by *feigning a letter to be sent with contrary news have stayed the same*, but it will now be perfectly known shortly to the Irishrie. And therefore, because I do vehemently suspect that when this news shall be more open to Sir Brian he should join with the rest and revolt, as I think they will all do, in my opinion it were not amiss to take pledges of him the best I might get. And therefore do desire your Lordship's answer, for surely if this news had been that they were coming over to aid the Irish against the Scots, it would, in my opinion, have animated them to serve her Majesty. But now hearing that they shall be thrust out and others made Lords over them, how they will take it your Lordship's wisdom may discover."

Burghley endorses the following words:—

"This matter in print doth give all the Irish of the north occasion to join with the Scots, fearing to be in time thrust out of all."

And on the 4th October, 1572, when Smith and his small force were in the country, the Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam writes thus to Burghley:—

"Sir Brian M'Phelim hath now discovered his Irish nature, for it is advertised by sundry letters he hath not only joined with Turlough Lynagh, but also that he is the very drawer of him and the Scots to their mischievous dealing, hoping by furthering of Tirlough's demands to amend withal his own reckoning concerning the Ardes. In further detecting of his lewdness he hath lately taken one Thomas Moore, an English gentleman, brother to Edward Moore and lieutenant to Nicholas Malby; he setteth him out to ransom as a lawful prisoner, and maketh other arrogant demands savouring altogether of rebellion. But I intend to work a means to reclaim him to duty, and such a means as will do it indeed, or never any, except force. And this it is. There is one Con M'Neill Oge, cousin-german to himself, a prisoner shackled in this Castle—a dangerous fellow, and such a one and so well followed in that country that I believe verily he would soon turn Sir Brian out of it. And my meaning is to shake the rod upon him, and to bring him in opinion (wherewith I am already doing) that if he do go out I will turn Con out, with the fear whereof I hope to

hold him in some state from running too far. But I will tell your Lordship truly—If all run not to such ruin, as worse it cannot be, though Con and the devil himself were let loose, I mean not to let him go, though I have great offers of pledge for his dutifulness;<sup>1</sup> for so perilous a fellow he is that he cares not what or how many of his friends do perish so he may be at liberty.”

These letters prove that Sir Brian was treated with duplicity by persons in power. He was still the reputed owner of Belfast and Clannaboye, and to the very last, so far as can reasonably be judged, desirous of preserving that amity and relationship with the Government which, he declares, he had observed from his youth. He had earned the ill-will of his countrymen for so acting, and they were now thoroughly disturbed by the presence and pretensions of Smith. The following additional letters will further explain the situation of affairs :—

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<sup>1</sup> These are the flattering offers to which the Lord Deputy refers in his letter :—

“Owen M’Neill, Hugh M’Neill Oge’s son ; and Donnell O’Neill, Con M’Neill Oge’s son, offer 200 Cows for the ransom of Con M’Neill Oge, and a rent of 100 Cows yearly for Clandeboy, Donnell M’Neill offering to place himself in the Baron O’Neill’s hands until the 200 Cows be paid, and order taken for the yearly payment of 100 Cows rent for Clandeboy.

“Con M’Neill, when released, to have 100 of her Majesty’s soldiers to subdue Clandeboy, destroy the Scots, and raise the number of cows.

“Owen O’Neill craves that he may be allowed to possess and hold Clandeboy after Con’s days, to serve the prince, and pay the rent, and also to keep the island of Bailie Gallogly in his hands as he ought.

“They say that if Neill Bryan Fertagh do promise any more than the same offer that it is more than he is able to perform, and that also this offer truly paid and well got is better and more prosperous than any greater offer unjustly granted by Neill or any one that takes his part, who hath no pledge to put in for the same but only his own bare promise.”

This document presents the O’Neills in rather an unfavourable aspect. There are here no lofty claims of rightful dominion, of standing as superiors to any in the land by virtue of great territorial possessions and ancient lineage, the entire paper rather resembling the squabbles of Irish tenants contending for the acquirement of some mountain farm, each candidate outbidding his neighbour, or disparaging his ability to meet the landlord’s rent.

The person for whose freedom these offers were made was Brian O’Neill’s near relative—cousin, the Lord Deputy says ; but he was really his elder brother, brought, with his uncle, into long durance by Sir Brian’s connivance. The Lord Deputy’s avowed stroke of policy to keep Sir Brian in order by threatening to let his rival free is a small sample of the spirit of the age.



"The Lord Deputy to Burghley. Upon respect of the sudden stirs like to grow in the north through the late binding that Turlough Lynagh hath wrought with sundry of the Irishry, and his attempting to bring under him Sir Brian M'Phelim, Captain Malbie has gone to the aid of Sir Brian with 100 horsemen and 200 Kerne or more."

"Lord Deputy and Council to the Queen. We have taken order that your gracious meaning in your Highnesses letter expressed, as touching the states passed to Sir Thomas Smith and his son and such like, hath been partly already published, and have given order for the same to be opened, and declared to what good end those grants have been so passed by your Majesty. And have sent your Highnesses letter to Sir Brian M'Phelim, whose parts of dealing being gladdened with the comfort thereof may appear to your Majesty in the copy of Captain Piers' letter. And under our hands have avowed and declared unto Sir Bryan (as your Majesty hath willed) your express meaning and intention not to suffer any person to dispossess him of his lands and territories wherein he hath right or interest, he continuing in his faithful service. And yet some persons, to hinder your Majesty's peace and service, have not ceased even of late days to raise the *bruit* of Thomas Smith's landing for the purpose of expulsion as formerly was advertised. And to manifest the same, other books in print of a large discourse to fear and disanimate such others as Sir Bryan is, have eftsoon been put into print there in England, and much to be doubted will breed more trouble than the first book,<sup>1</sup> which proffered not so ready or sharp an entry to their territory as this last one doth. By chance one of the books of this last print

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<sup>1</sup> One of the books published by Smith, explaining to his expected followers the nature and advantages of the country to which they were invited, the inducements to embrace the brilliant offers made to them, the expense and preparations for their outfit, and all particulars at great length, has recently been republished in that able and comprehensive work, *The MacDonnells of Antrim*, by the Rev. George Hill, p. 405. If it had not been there it would have been reprinted in this work as an appendix, a great part of it being in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, and as Smith had so much of the country close to Belfast, and the town itself, or rather the site of it, granted to him. The only extract necessary to make are the concluding words, the urgent appeal for promptness in procuring the sinews of war—what outspoken men in these degenerate days would call the last attempt to float the company. They are—"We Request all our partakers to make so speedy payment of their adventures as possible they may, that nothing be wanting at the time of our forth setting, which they shall learn of the Treasurer or Receiver where they pay the money, with the place and day of our general meeting and embarking."

came to my hands, which I have sent herewith to your Majesty, but the author or bringer thereof cannot be known."

In another letter from the Lord Deputy to Burghley are these expressions:—"I will do what I may to pacify all things and to keep Sir Brian in tune as I have done hitherto." But in spite of all the fair professions which were made use of towards him, it is quite impossible he could have seen anything but danger in the grant to Smith and the action thereupon already taken. Much depended on Smith's success; but Sir Brian was constrained by inevitable circumstances to regard the attempt, at last, as an invasion of his rights, and to unite with his countrymen to expel the aggressor. His forbearance must have been great, as even by the avowal of Piers, when the country was in a state of war, he says, "Sir Brian is completely thrown over by his own kindred;" and "that he had forsaken all manner of offers, to serve the Queen." This could not be expected to continue; feigned letters and delusive promises were no longer available; and finally, Malbie, an officer of eminence, who distinguished himself greatly in these wars, and whom we have recently seen in command at Belfast, writes to the Lord Deputy, that

"Sir Brian had come into the Ards with all his force and took all the prey, and set fire upon some towns, where one Henry Savage was killed by his special appointment. Prior Donelagh was in company with him. This was done by Turlough Lynagh's appointment, who hath Sir Brian's son to pledge to perform any evil against her Majesty. He is bent to do what he can. . . . All my neighbours are ready to go to him, and those who all this summer were at my devotion stand now in terms not to come to me, such is their uncertain promises and wicked disposition. A horseman of mine who came from Sir Brian doth tell me that he hath burnt the Abbeys of Newtown, Bangor, Moville, Holywood, and sundry other places; and that on Friday next, he and Turlough Lynagh do meet at Dundrum to come to me, and do me what hurt they can."

Such were the results of Smith's ill-advised expedition. At the end of October, 1572, the Lord Deputy writes to Sir Thomas himself, "that the northern mischiefs impeach his son's good



enterprise." The son continued, during the winter of this year, carrying on a feeble warfare. He was, it may be presumed, sometimes at Belfast Castle, but at no time does he appear here in power or actual possession. The place was held up to this date by the Queen and Sir Brian conjointly—certainly till the latter openly united himself with his countrymen—after which it passed from one to another as the fortune of war decreed.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> All the lengthened extracted documents in this chapter are in the *Pinkerton MSS.* They are not in that collection in strict chronological sequence ; but as they now appear they make the subject, it is hoped, sufficiently clear. The chapter trespasses beyond the bounds of Belfast, but the interest attaching to the narrative, and its intimate connection with Sir Brian M'Phelim O'Neill, render that excusable, as it was unavoidable. The next chapter will be to much extent more of Belfast matter, and the documents in it have been obtained direct, within a short time past, from that great repository, the Public Record Office, London, in MS., and, in a few cases, from the *Carew Papers* which have been published.

## CHAPTER III.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

**B**EFORE Thomas Smith had time to discover the rashness of his enterprise and its impending failure, another undertaker, of greater power and more illustrious name, had also received from the Queen a grant of Clannaboye and other places, provided he could remove, in conjunction with the warlike and knightly followers among whom the country was to be parcelled out, “the rebellious natives from thence.” This was Walter Devereux, Earl of Essex. His grant ran into that of Smith, and included, it may be said, almost the entire of the county of Antrim. Its provisions are set forth at great length,<sup>1</sup> and the preliminary negotiations leading to its final accomplishment began so early as May, 1573. This was little more than a year after a portion, at least, of the very same territories had been granted to the Smiths by binding treaty. The patent to the Earl of Essex was most comprehensive. He received “the grant of the dominions of Clandeboye, Rowte, Glynnnes, Raughlins, and all lands, &c., belonging to those countries in the Earldom of Ulster, and all lands, tenements, and hereditaments from Knockfergus Bay, including the river of the Belfast, directly to the next part of the Lough, and from the Lough to the Bann, and so to the sea along the Bann, and from the Bann all about the land by the sea coast.” The details of this grant must have interfered with the powers of the Lord Deputy; but, armed with it, Essex was in the country in 1573, and a very long and valuable communication, dated 2nd November of that year, proves that he arrived some months previously.<sup>2</sup> The

<sup>1</sup> *Carew MSS.*, 1515–1574, p. 439, *et seq.*

<sup>2</sup> “About the 20th August 1573 came the Right Honorable the Earl of Essex into this lond as Lord Governour of the Province of Ulster accompanied with

document refers to the state of the country and the army, neither of which was at all in a satisfactory condition. Smith was saved from destruction in County Down by the presence of a small force there under Captain Malbie, he himself keeping possession at Carrickfergus, and not only unable to protect that town, but exercising towards its inhabitants much oppression, if their petition to the Lord Deputy against him be a trustworthy document.<sup>1</sup> He must have left Carrickfergus and Belfast, if he ever had any hold on the latter, shortly after this petition was sent to the Lord Deputy, as it is recorded that on the 2nd June, 1573, "the Toune of Carrickfergus was for the moste parte destroyed by fier, by reason of Captain Smythe's departure out of the same, by Sur Brian M'Phellime O'Neill and his Co-partners."<sup>2</sup> This was found to be true by the Earl of Essex on his arrival, and may be taken as a general picture of the entire country, as is farther set forth in full, at the very beginning of the important paper referred to, in his own words :—

"At my arrival here I found the countries in arms, and no place out of the hands of the Irish rebels or of Scots, but only the town of Knockfergus, which the townsmen meant to leave and abandon, having prepared all things for their journey into the English Pale, meaning only to have victualled a few small castles in the town, and to have *mured* up the doors and windows, and so to have put them in

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many a lusty Gentleman, and loded in this Towne of Knoockfergus."—*Records of Carrickfergus*.

A view of the country, and the struggles of Essex and his followers, is afforded by the following extract from the papers of Mr. M'Skimin, said by him to be copied from *Holinshed's Chronicles*:—

"1573. The Earl of Essex with the Lord Rich and other Gentlemen embarked for Ireland at Liverpool. After many perils the ship he was in made Copman's Island from whence in a pinnace he reached Knockfergus. Lord Rich made Killcliffe Castle and was thence conducted to Inch Abby (Maister Malbie's house) from whence with a guard of 150 horsemen besides 50 Kerns that went on foot thro' the woods he was conducted safely to Knockfergus. Among those were 30 bowes with a Bagpipe; the rest had darts."

<sup>1</sup> This curious petition, and Fitzwilliam's answer to it, dated 29th May, 1573, will be found in the *History of Carrickfergus*, pp. 289–291.

<sup>2</sup> *History of Carrickfergus*, p. 29.

the guard of some few servants, leaving the rest to the enemy, only the Queen's Castle to have been defended by Piers who had a ward for the same. But the same townsmen, taking heart by the *bruit* of her Majesty's army to be sent under me, staid their determination, and have now settled themselves in their habitation."

This is explicit enough; and Essex goes on to relate that at Carrickfergus Sir Brian at first submitted himself, probably thinking that a greater force than that of Smith was now coming against him, but afterwards revolted, because he was encouraged by Turnour, a "practiser with Turlough Lynnough," who gave out that the King of Spain was to send speedy aid to the Irish; and to "the slack coming of our victuals from Dominick Cheaster whereof no part arrived in this haven till 3rd October, the state of which victualling being made open unto him by some traitor amongst ourselves, he departed." This latter reason is generally said to have been that which influenced Sir Brian to take away his herds of cattle, and to abandon the Earl of Essex, together with the inadequate force which he also, as well as Smith, had brought with him, and some of whom, alarmed at the rigours of an Irish winter, returned to their English homes. This cause, if the true one, exhibited on Sir Brian's side, to say the least, vacillating conduct, and an entire distaste in reality to the proceedings of Essex. The latter, however, by this 2nd of November, had time to examine the country and estimate its capabilities, and among many suggestions for its settlement, and descriptive particulars of it, has this passage:—

"The experience of the beginning of this winter whereof I have made trial here, doth persuade how unnecessary this town of Knockfergus is for the lodging of any garrison, both for lack of wood and convenient harbour for ships and for annoying of enemies which commonly keep themselves in the woods. Therefore considering that near unto, Belfaste is a place meet for a corporate town, armed with all commodities, as a principal haven, wood and good ground, standing also upon a border, and a place of great importance for service, I think it convenient that a fortification be made there at the spring; the fortification for the circuit, and a storehouse for victuals to be at her Majesty's charges; all other buildings at mine, and such as shall

inhabit it ; and for the doing hereof I desire that Ligh the engineer, or some other skilful in fortification, should be sent hither, who shall also build a Bridge upon the Laigan without her Majesty's charge."<sup>1</sup>

None of these grand projects took effect, though they fully show how soon the position of Belfast approved itself to the understanding of the Earl of Essex. The ill success of his plantation—as well as the difficulties, both covert and open, with which he had to contend—diverted his attention from peaceful undertakings. Even with Smith he had to make arrangements, at the very outset of his career, as the following paper proves:—

“Memorandum by Secretary Smith May 26th 1573.<sup>2</sup> My Lord of Essex standeth upon this point as appeareth. That except he may have of me belfaste, Masserine, Castle Moubray otherwise called Eden doucarg, and Castle Tomey ; That he will not meddle with the Enterprise of Ireland. Rather than his good Enterprise should be left of, Although they be the most special places both for beauty, and pfect in all Clanyboy, and the strongest in scyte—Yet rather than that should hinder this so honorable a Voyage I am content that my Lorde shall have them of me and my son to him and to his heires for ever freely, upon condition such as my Lord hath already granted, (as I take it) that is, to discharge the Queen's Majesty's rent which is XX<sup>s</sup> Irish yearly of every Irish plowland which maketh English acres cclij, and when he hath possessed Clanyboy to give, grant, and deliver freely to my son and the heirs of his body, and for default of such issue, to my right heirs, either the same Castles and territories or so much other lands within Clandyboy such as we and our heirs shall choose, as all those Castles and territories of them, do amount unto and in the mean time to pay yearly unto us for every C acres English of these territories a xij English. The said Castles and territories also to be the confines betwixt my Lord of Essex and Clanyboy and ours. All north from thence to be my Lords, all south to be ours without contradiction—The *Territory* of *belferst* to be accounted from the river of *ferst* a mile and half north<sup>3</sup> and from the same and the bay of

<sup>1</sup> *Carew MSS.*, 1515-1574, p. 448.

<sup>2</sup> *State Papers*, original MS., vol. xi., No. 66, Ireland, Elizabeth,

<sup>3</sup> This paper requires a note of explanation. This is the second instance that reference is made to the *Farset*—by Smith called *Ferst*—the little river which runs through High Street, Belfast. The agreement makes Essex owner of Bel-

Knockfergus West two miles all of the same breadth. The Territory of the *pories* (?) of Masserine to be from the park where the Abbey stood a mile north and a mile south keeping the same breadth, and two miles east and as much west from the said Castle. The like territories to be of Castle Mowbray. Castle Tome standing upon the Lough Eagh must have half a mile south measuring by the lough and a mile and half north by the river of the 'ban,' and then eastward taking the same breadth towards Castle Mowbray four miles. And if it do fall out in the measure there is more distance betwixt the

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fast, and the other castles, named Castle Tomey (Toome), Edenduffcarriek (Shane's Castle), with some land around each of them, as if for accommodation purposes; and the opinion held both of them and Belfast at the time is very definitely expressed. An explanation of the Belfast notice alone will be attempted, and perhaps it may be done but imperfectly. There is a small square fort, or earthwork, some little distance above the Carrickfergus shore road, and about a mile and a-half or two miles from Belfast. It has been the subject of some conjecture; but it is possible the arrangement between Smith and Essex, as related in the text, may explain its history. It was called in James the First's time Fort Essex, at least no other place answering the description has ever been identified; but, this name being lost or unknown, guesses were hazarded as to the origin of the fort, one being that it was constructed by William the Third, or by some of his army in his honour, and hence the demesne in which it is was called Fortwilliam. There is no written account, nor any probability, that the fort was made at the time of the Revolution. It is too small for any purpose of defence or security, being only about eighty feet square. Objection will also apply to its being the place mentioned in the *State Papers* as the fort built by Essex individually, there being no appearance of any *building* ever having been at it. Keeping in mind the facts, however, that the place was called Fort Essex, and that the agreement between Smith and Essex describes a distance from the Castle of Belfast, so nearly concurring with its actual situation, and that it is a mere earthwork, it is perhaps not an unsafe conjecture to say that this was the very memorial boundary made by the Earl of Essex, in 1573, to mark the limit of the precinct of Belfast, surrendered to him by Smith. This is no doubt conjectural, but that the Fortwilliam of the present day—the Fort Essex of a former period—is in some way mixed up with this very agreement between Smith and Essex seems probable. That Essex, however, really began to build a fort somewhere near Belfast cannot reasonably be doubted, of which here is the proof—

“Out of a lre of the Earl of Essex to the ll. of the Councill written in Carigfargus the 2 of Decemb 1573 :—

“The Earl of Essex buildeth a forte neere Belfaste, wherby he commandeth the passages over certaine rivers and waters, and cutteth downe wood quyetly to the greate discouragement of the Irishe.”—*State Papers*, vol. xlviii., No. 58, Ireland, Elizabeth.

The situation of the little earthwork here mentioned would not correspond with these requirements. It could not have commanded passages over certain



said Castles east and west, yet that space shall be to either Castle equally divided, and my Lord shall pay nothing for that but only be bound to trench out and make a plain and known partition on the south side of all these territories."

This is the rather indefinite and involved language in which Sir Thomas Smith wrote when his patent and that of Essex came into collision. The Queen herself interfered about the boundaries and divisions of her two adventurers,<sup>1</sup> and it is not to

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rivers and waters. The fort which Essex began, or proposed to build, on 2nd December, 1573, to effect these objects, must have been much nearer the site of the intended corporate town. It was most probably not completed, as no accounts have appeared of such building having ever been brought into requisition for any purpose.

The proof in writing, or supposed proof, that what is now called Fortwilliam, and the Mount Essex in the Chichester Grant—the recital of which occurs in the lease given by Sir Arthur Chichester to Moses Hill—are identical, is, in these words, copied from the latter document. Sir Arthur granted the fishing to Hill, describing the same as—

"All those his fishings and wears of all kinds of Fish in that part of the Lagan River lying from the point of land towards the Sea whereon the little fort of Mount Essex stands, &c."

That the present Fortwilliam should have been the Fort Essex or Mount Essex of the sixteenth century is incapable of strict proof, and is merely introduced here to open the question. The description—"the point of land towards the sea whereon the little fort of Mount Essex stands"—is confusing, and the discovery at any future time, if ever made, of the exact spot on which Lord Essex built, or began to build, a strong defensive fort "neere Belfast," would fully explain, it is probable, all the circumstances of the case.

<sup>1</sup> The Queen's letter on this subject is to this effect:—

"And further our will and pleasure is that you shall appoint certain wise and discreet men to bound the country by authority of commission, under our great seal of Ireland, as well betwixt the territory given to the said Sir Thomas Smith and Thomas his son; that is to say, by a straight line drawn from the north part of the mouth of the river called *ferst*, where it entereth into the sea, to the next east part of the lough called Lough Eagh, where is the shortest cut betwixt them.—Whereof, all that is north from that line to belong to us and our crown, and the said Earl by moities—all that is south from that line to belong to the said Sir Thomas and Thomas, *according as it is agreed betwixt them.* . . . And what they have done herein they shall certify to you in perfect and fair books, and shall cause some 'plattes' to be made thereof, and so you to us, accordingly, that thereupon we may resolve how to cause our portion to be used and inhabited. "The Queen to the Lord Deputy 29th Sept 1573." —*State Papers*, vol. xlii., No. 31, Ireland, Elizabeth.

How invaluable would these books and "plattes" be at this day, if they were ever made! It is most likely they never were, the projects of both Smith and Essex having so soon after come to an end.



be supposed that Smith offered any difficulty to such arrangement as she desired. Essex himself says, "the Queen being satisfied, all bargains will be easy;" and he considered his coming would greatly promote the success of Smith's adventure in County Down. He must, therefore, from this time be considered the English owner of Belfast, under the Queen, to whom the Castle was afterwards reserved. The Earl of Essex came thus to have an intimate connection with Belfast, though no memorial of his proceedings or his presence now exists within the bounds of the town. He, one of the most famed of England's nobility—a favourite of the Queen, and connected with her by relationship—had staked his all on this plantation scheme. A few papers but recently brought to public notice, and the name of Essex in two or three places at some distance from the town—the situation of which he so highly appreciated—alone preserve in this country of Clannaboye the memory of his adventure. He had soon to defend his territory. Smith was immediately overshadowed—almost lost sight of—in the greater power and station of Essex. To the latter the war with Sir Brian and his auxiliaries, at least so far as it was connected with this place, chiefly fell; and at variance as he was with Piers, the governor of Carrickfergus—not countenanced by the Lord Deputy, who considered the very extensive commission granted to him inconsistent with his own—and finding the Irish around him more powerful in themselves, and in their alliances with distant O'Neills and Scots, than he expected, his partial success proved great courage and ability; and if he had been properly supported by those from whom assistance and countenance might have been received, it would be impossible to tell what might have been the issue of his bold adventure. The Irish, at first seemingly friendly—as has been seen in the case of Sir Brian O'Neill—turned against him in a short time; they asserted that the war was not the Queen's, but that of a private undertaker. They thought he had come over to expel the Scots, to settle the country, to leave it again in peace when those objects were accomplished, and Sir Brian reinstated in his former

position. But when they discovered that the enterprise of Essex was only a repetition of Smith's attempt, and that the land was to be divided among his followers, they were enraged "with the fury of desperation."<sup>1</sup> Essex, to strengthen himself against O'Neill, applied to have the two relatives of the latter, still "shackled in Dublin Castle," delivered to him, with a view, somewhat similar to that of the Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam, of holding them as a rod of terror over Sir Brian. He thus writes—

"You shall remember their Lordships that in the Castle of Dublin there are two prisoners, the one Hugh M'Phelim, elder brother of Sir Brian who challengeth the country of Clandeboy upon the north side of the bay of Knockfergus; the other Con M'Neill Oge who was Lord of Clandeboye on the south side. I do desire that these two be put into my hands, because, having them prisoners with me there will be daily practice for the confusion of Brian who hath usurped upon them both. They offer me good pledges to draw away his followers and to live dutifully. And although I know that being at liberty they were as dangerous as the other, yet such order might be taken with them as might advance the service, and the parties in as good surety as now they be. Therefore you shall desire warrant to the Lord Deputy for sending them hither by sea, to be delivered to me and used as I think good."

The preceding letter was in November, 1573, when Essex had acquired some knowledge of his position, as before it—namely, on the 20th October of the same year—he writes to the Privy Council, "that he has taken 400 of Sir Brian M'Felim's Kine and slain 40 of his men. . . . News that Thomas Smith, Mr. Secretary's son was slain in the Ardes by Irishmen of his own household whom he much trusted."<sup>2</sup> . . . Kerne

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, 1509-1573, p. 530.

<sup>2</sup> This is correct. Thomas Smith was killed in the County Down, in October, 1573. It is said the deed was done by some of the Irish whom he had subsidised to assist him. Sir Thomas Smith himself died in 1577, but in 1575 he proposed to sell his right to the Ards, which had not yet lapsed, to Essex. Sir Thomas offers to part with the Ards, "both great and litle," for £2000. "It has cost me," he says, "near £300 besides the death of my sonne." (See, for this statement, *The Dominion of Farney*, p. 52.) This was not effected. Sir Thomas bequeathed

revolt and turn their weapons on the English." And only eight days after this, he has another encounter with Sir Brian in this very neighbourhood, which is thus described in his own language. It may partially inform us what sort of place the site of Belfast was in 1573.

"The Earl of Essex to the Privy Council, dated Knockfergus, 28th October, 1573.

"Since the writing of the last letters by Mr. Bowes: the Baron of Dungannon, Mr. More of Millefont, and Mr. Malbie with the horsemen that I sent to the relief of them at Cumber were stayed at the ford of Belfast by the Rebels, who were gathered in great numbers upon the other side of the ford, to stop their passage; whereof having knowledge by a letter from Mr. Malbie I marched thither with 300 footmen and 100 horse, and the next low water after my coming I passed over the ford with no great resistance, and then with my company I departed to the Cumber which I found newly set on fire (as I take it) by Mr. Smith's men, who I learned were even then departed into the Little Ards, and conducted thither by Frederough Savaige. In my return from thence, Brian and all his power were gathered near the ford to stop my passage, my company being then diminished by the departure of the Baron, Mr. Moore and others into the English Pale. Upon sight of them we entered into skirmish which they maintained after their manner reasonably well by the space of two hours, but to their cost, for there were slain of them by their own report above 100 and all in the skirts of the wood, for upon the hard ground they would not come. I continued as long as the turning of the flood would suffer me, and then departed over the water and there encamped all night where we might hear their cries after their country fashion, for the loss of them that were dead."<sup>1</sup>

This kind of warfare continued for a considerable time

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to his nephew, Sir William Smith, the benefit of his claim under Queen Elizabeth's grant. This claim was put forward by Sir William, or his descendants, many years after; and, as will be seen, it even troubled Sir Arthur Chichester in the following century. In 1583, Sir Henry Sidney declared it was still in full force.

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, vol. xlii., No. 58, Ireland, Elizabeth. To identify the site of this battle would now be a hard task. It was probably near the present Ballymacarrett, and, if so, is now the site of a large town—the County Down part of Belfast. Essex and his small army must have encamped during the night at Belfast, on familiar ground, not far from the water's edge.

with varying success. Essex was sometimes contending with enemies at a distance, and sometimes within our own borders. Many of the letters recounting his actions are dated from his "Campe near Belfast," two of which follow. They repeat the same story, and are irregular in dates, and somewhat indistinct in narration. One is to the Queen, the other to the Privy Council. They indicate an opening of cordiality again with Sir Brian, from which it may be inferred that he had been worsted in the war in Clannaboye, and was disposed to come to terms. They, and others which follow, are extremely interesting and valuable in their details regarding Belfast :—

"The Earl of Essex to the Queen. From the Camp near Belfast 13 May 1574.

"The 20th I removed and encamped hard by the Lagan water, parcel of Clandeboye, not seven miles from Belfarst where by reason of the great rain which fell the night before I was fain to stay until the next morning at which time I did hardly pass the water. . . . The 22nd I came hither and encamped<sup>1</sup> until the 26th, during which time both putting out espialls and expecting to hear from Sir Brian who stood upon terms of parlance before my coming, both by his earnest letters and like messages, I advised with myself how to proceed further, and having no advertisement from himself but what I understood by my espialls of the place where he was encamped, accompanied with the Scotts standing all upon their guard I thought good to set forward to see what I could do, either to force him to come in and acknowledge his duties, or else to do my best to expulse him, and so the 26th day I marched to Kellis where I encamped that night. . . . I thought it best to make what composition I could having him (Sir Brian) in so good terms, and to take him at his word. . . . He hath condescended and is well content that your Majesty shall have the use of the land from Belfast unto Olderfleet, which is fifteen or sixteen miles of length, but not broad in which is also contained Mageines Island, which land I trust will yield your Majesty as much yearly as the 1500 Kine do amount unto, and consequently he doth give himself wholly and all his titles unto your Highness, yet it was thought good by me and him that his parcel of

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<sup>1</sup> That is, he was now again at his general camping-ground, beside Belfast, for these four days.

land be reserved unto your Majesty, because his followers (whom he doth mislike as much as I do) as seemeth unto me, should have no occasion of quarrels; being a thing agreed upon he doth also agree after this next winter is past to yield every year so many oats as shall suffice for 100 horse, besides all other rents. Upon these points he is departed from me very well pleased, and hath drawn down all his *Kirriatts* and cattle within six miles of this place in the plains.”<sup>1</sup>

The next letter is to the same tenor, but rather more explicit:—

“The Earl of Essex to the Privy Council. From the Camp near Belfast 13 May 1574.

“The 20th day I removed and came to the Lagan water where I could not pass over because of the great rain that fell the day before; so was I forced to stay that night by the waterside which the next morning I passed over with great difficulty, and came to Belfarste encamping myself there, where I determined to stay until by espiall I might know of Sir Brian’s doings. . . . While I lay at Belfast I received letters from the Knight marshall, that Moore’s and Goring’s bands were arrived at the Newry, and marched towards me. . . . After I had staid at Belfaste until the 26th day, and in the mean time understanding of Sir Brian’s doings I set forward the same day towards him, and encamped that night at Kellis. . . . Among the rest of my proceedings I think it necessary to signify unto your Lordships that where I had begun to intrench a large town here at Belfarste, minding to have placed most of the garrison, as a place most fittest for that purpose Sir Brian intreated me to leave off for a time, until his people and *Kyrryattes* were well settled; for, that, he said, his people would be jealous and loath to bring down their *Kyrryattes* if they saw any building here. And hath promised me that at his own cost he will build the said

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<sup>1</sup> Extracts from original MS. twenty-four folios long. *S.P.O.*, vol. xlvi., No. 10, Ireland, Elizabeth.

This is more frequently spelled *Creaghts*, and means the cattle and families of the Irish following the chief in his movements from place to place. A troop of this kind—or rather, it may be supposed, of cattle only—attended the army for its ready subsistence in these and subsequent wars. In peaceful times, as is well known, gathering in creaghts—that is, wandering about with their cattle, and settling down for a time in convenient or favourable localities, or till the grass around was consumed by the stock—was a usual mode of living, particularly in summer, among the Irish tribes.

towne for the Queen, so as I would allow him my labourers which I have here, being to the number of 60, under the leading of Raphe Crawley, to which labourers he would bestow Flesh (Gratis) and I to allow them bread and drink. So shall the town be done as in his name for himself, and being finished, he hath promised to deliver it to her Majesty's use." <sup>1</sup>

It is plain from this letter there was no town at Belfast in May, 1574. The dislike of the Irish to the building of a town at this place is in character with the people and the age. The politic arrangement of the Earl of Essex and Sir Brian for the purpose was not accomplished, their friendly compact having in a few months more come to an utter and disastrous end. It is customary to assert that the Earl of Essex was unsuccessful in these wars; locally this can scarcely be said to be the fact, as these letters prove; "the O'Neill" of the day (Turlough Lennagh) and the Scots were too powerful for his weak force, but his conduct to this time and his military success cannot be disparaged. Almost immediately after his arrival in Ireland, seeing the jealousies and opposition which met him, he had offered to resign the great privileges and powers which the Queen had given him, and to act under the Lord Deputy in a private capacity in the prosecution of what he considered an enterprise tending to the public good. That he had not subdued Sir Brian is perhaps true, but that he had weakened him and brought him to terms, the following letter, written in the same month as the two preceding, and prior in point of date, will sufficiently prove:—

"Letter from Sir Brian M'Phelim to the Queen.

"The Camp near Belfast, 8 May, 1574. . . . Has thrown himself on her Majesty's mercy—Submits to Essex—renounces his title to Claneboye, but cleaves to her Majesty's clemency to dispose of such portions to him as she shall think meet; I also most humbly beseech your most excellent Majesty that at the least I may be your Highnesses 'fermor' of this land of Clandeboye to which I have my said Lord's consent, and agreement,—for this year to pay fifteen

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, original MS., vol. xlvii., No. 12, Ireland, Elizabeth.



hundred Kine as in way of rent to your Majesty, with promise to increase the same yearly, as I and my people shall by the grace of God, with the maintenance of peace grow more plentiful in this worldly wealth.”<sup>1</sup>

This appears a very ample submission, and, previously, Sir Brian had made intercession to be admitted to mercy and favour. His conduct was wavering; abject submissions, and uniting again with his countrymen and the Scots, seem to have been almost his ordinary course. In this same month he is proclaimed a traitor, and £200 offered for his head. Essex says he meditates a journey against him; and yet immediately after he writes to the Queen soliciting a pardon for Sir Brian, so constant and unaccountable were the variances and reconciliations between them. The Queen, however, did really accede to the request of Essex and to Sir Brian's very submissive letter, addressing the latter in these words:—

“By your letter of 8th May we understand that you repent having been withdrawn by evil counsels from the obedience you owe to us. We confirm whatever the Earl of Essex has promised you in our name, and have given him power to treat with you respecting lands and other matters concerning the peace of the province of Ulster.”

Sir Brian O'Neill and the Earl of Essex had often, in those days of their occasional friendship, viewed together the site of Belfast, and interchanged thoughts upon the subject. Something must even have been done—some little attempts made by Ralph Crawley and his sixty labourers, as the following communication implies:—

“Lords of the Council to the Earl Essex, of Dated Windsor, 11th July, 1574. . . . And as touching the place where they (*i.e.*, the troops) should remain for this winter now coming, we suppose Knockfergus and Belfast to be the places most convenient: Of the which Knockfergus being sufficiently furnished, the more that should lie at Belfast we do think it the better for service, because it keeps the streight,<sup>2</sup> and being but newly made, it may peradventure require a

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, vol. xlv., No. 5, Ireland, Elizabeth.

<sup>2</sup> This is curious language. The “streight” must mean the Ford or Passage; but the expression “newly made” would describe building, or intrenchments recently made, or in process or expectation of being made.



better defence : and that the same soldiers might at times, when they be not otherwise occupied by their captains, and their good example, be induced to intrench and work there, somewhat for their own defence and commodity as well as not altogether to live idly : Such fortifications as may be done this year were well to be expedited before winter, and specially Belfaste now put into as much strength as may be : And if Sir Brian, as he hath promised, will send aid and help to the doing of it, so that there be no fraud therein, he is not to be refused, but to be thanked therefor ; and the English soldiers by his example the more encouraged to put to their hands also. The Brew House, Storehouse, and the Mill were very necessary to be perfected there this year."

The garrison between the two places—Carrickfergus and Belfast—is estimated in this paper at about 700 men, of which the greater number being at Belfast, would necessitate considerable accommodation. It was under the control of Essex, and yet, notwithstanding his apparently favourable reports, his relations during the summer, both with his own Government and Sir Brian, were harassing and unpleasant. The Queen was dissatisfied at the ill success which, on the whole, had hitherto attended the Clannaboye wars. She had accepted from Essex a surrender of his patents, and yet he continued to act as before ; he intended to proceed against the Scots, and "will be attended," he says, "by Sir Brian." Mr. Edward Barkley, the possessor of what was then called "the little pile beneath the Cave"—the modern Greencastle—declares, in a letter to Burghley, that Sir Brian's proceedings were "only to gain time till our victuals are spent—no wool on the sheep to make mantles, no flax, no credit or traffic but with the Scots." Barnaby Goche also, another of those adventurous spirits who had followed Essex, had likewise declared, so early as April in this year, that "the state of the country groweth worse and worse ; Divers of the natural inhabitants forsake all and run into England—the rebel strong—the soldier weary—the Earl of Essex painful in the service of his country." These were the unhappy relations existing among the parties, and it really does not appear with what zeal, if any, Sir Brian assisted Essex in his attempt against "the rebel," as

Turlough Lennagh was then, by way of eminence, called. Essex could tolerate this state of things no longer, and from what he conceived and had heard, and has himself declared to be sufficient grounds, brought it to a close in the following manner, as described in this letter :—

“The Earl of Essex to the Lord Deputy, 14th Nov., 1574.

“My very good Lord ; Before my coming unto ‘Belfirste’ with the army I was credibly informed that Bryan M‘Phelemy was daily practising to agree with ‘Tirrelagh Lenagh,’ and in very deed was through with him to combine in rebellion—whereupon by the way encamping I sent secretly to Captain Malby (being then before at Carrickfergus) to have a good eye upon him until my coming, who, having care unto it, did accordingly, without any suspicion given, very circumspectly discharge the matter committed unto him, and met me in very good time a mile from Belfirst, accompanied with Sir Brian, Rory Oge and others, who after their dissembling manner welcomed me into the country, which I accepted, as well pleased. So we marched together to the camping place near ‘Belfirste,’ where also Bryans wife came to salute me, the more to blind me. I was not any time rested until by sundry persons of credit I was more informed of his treachery meant, and conferring his former revolt with these advertisements then instant, and remembering the refusal I made of the first admonition then given I found it requisite for avoiding a second folly (by overmuch trust) to make sure work with so fickle a people ; and not without the advice and consent of all the captains in the Camp to whom I imparted all that I knew myself of Bryan’s lewd practices I gave order that evening to lay hold on him within the Castle of ‘Belfyrst’ where he lay, in which *Whorley* some resistance being offered by his men lodged in the Towne, sundry of them were slain to the number of 115. Sir Brian and his wife, Rory Oge, and one Brian M‘Revelin were taken in hand and one Guilduffe of Guilmyrre was also saved, who was in handlock in hand with Sir Bryan as a prisoner. This account done, the low water served at Belfyrst where I put over certain horsemen to lay hold upon the cattle in the Ards sides, and other horsemen I put towards the Lough side, who returning the next day brought in the number of 3000 head of cattle besides certain stud mares, whereof I will make your Lordship a present of six choice mares, and because your Lordship may stand surely informed of the truth of Sir Brians doings the rather to stop the ill bruits that may rise of these my doings (for all

men be not bent to say well) I do send you herewith some part of that was informed me against M'Phelemy which your Lordship may consider of, the rest at my meeting with your Lordship, which God willing I mind shall be shortly, I will myself make plain unto you. Thus much at this time I have thought good to advise you to find you occupied until my coming; bidding your Lordship in the mean time most heartily farewell. Your Lordship's assured to command,

“W. ESSEX.”<sup>1</sup>

The Earl, in another letter to the Privy Council, dated 24th Nov., 1574, has these words, but it is impossible to understand whether they refer to the same event—thus described by himself as having occurred in Belfast—or to another:—“I have of late apprehended Brian, his half brother Rory Oge Mac-Willey, Brian's wife, and certain other of the principal persons, and put other to the sword to the number of two hundred in all places, whereof forty of his best horsemen.” Some part of what was informed against Sir Brian is obtainable from the *Lives of the Earls of Essex*; and what is obscure in this narrative may, perhaps, be elucidated by the mention of events which preceded Sir Brian's capture, according to that work. It, of course, is favourable to the Earl, and is as follows:—

“The Earl of Essex's plan for the reformation and plantation of Ulster was approved at home, and in October, 1574, the Queen desired him to repair to Court, making arrangements with the Deputy for the government of Ulster in his absence; but if his absence should be in his opinion disadvantageous to the service, to send some one over well instructed in all points to resolve all doubts entertained of the plan. Having sure information that Sir Brian was about to revolt again he sent Captain Malbie over, and remained in Ireland himself, and Sir Brian not thinking his treachery was made known to Essex met him at Belfast. . . . After consulting all his captains he gave orders to arrest Brian M'Phelim that night which was accordingly done: the Irish resisting lost upwards of 100 *men* killed. . . . Essex thought it necessary to issue a Proclamation justifying this arrest, in which, after stating that M'Phelim never had a safe-conduct, he details the causes which induced his arrest—

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, vol. xlviii., No. 52, Ireland, Elizabeth.

his inveigling and treacherously murdering the Queen's subjects, whom he beheaded and placed their heads on poles; his endeavouring to starve the garrison of Knockfergus by withholding provisions; his parleys with Turlough Lynagh; his revealing to the Scots the intentions of the Earl against them, having by his professions obtained his confidence; his suffering the Scots to escape when he had undertaken, assisted by a force sent by Essex, to destroy them; his plan to get Captain Malbie into his hands, and afterwards to have fallen on one part of Essex's army at the ford of the Bann, while Turlough was to have done the same to that part that had crossed, and so have destroyed them and made an end of the war."<sup>1</sup>

Of these events, on the other hand, a high authority gives the following account:—

"Peace, sociality, and friendship were established between Brian, the son of Felim Bacagh O'Neill, and the Earl of Essex; and a feast was afterwards prepared by Brian, to which the Lord Justice and the chiefs of his people were invited, and they passed three nights and days together pleasantly and cheerfully. At the expiration of this time, however, as they were agreeably drinking and making merry, Brian, his brother, and his wife, were seized upon by the Earl, and all his people put unsparingly to the sword, men, women, youths, and maidens, in Brian's own presence. Brian was afterwards sent to Dublin, together with his wife and brother, where they were cut in quarters. Such was the end of their feast. This unexpected massacre—this wicked and treacherous murder of the Lord of the race of Hugh Boy O'Neill, the head and the senior of the race of Eoghan, son of Niall of the Nine Hostages and of all the Gaels, a few only excepted—was a sufficient cause of hatred [of the English] to the Irish."<sup>2</sup>

This disastrous event occurred within the Castle of Belfast, as Essex in his report plainly expresses. The language, also, of "resistance being offered by his men lodged in the *town*," would prove that there was some description of huts or shelter near the Castle thought to be worthy of that rather premature appellation. Sir Brian's men occupied the *town*, and if the *Four Masters* describe the event truly—that Sir Brian was the inviter on the

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<sup>1</sup> Devereux's *Lives of the Earls of Essex*, vol. i., p. 89.

<sup>2</sup> *Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. v., p. 1677.

occasion to the great feast in Belfast—the two circumstances would establish the fact that he had at the time possession of both, most probably with the concurrence of Essex, a sort of hollow friendship existing between them up to the fatal and memorable day which closed the career of the great Irish chief.

This O'Neill, whose history has occupied so large a space, was the greatest of the name that ever possessed Belfast. After his arrest he was sent up to Dublin, as Essex states, to be tried "by order of law;" he was there, with his friends, tried, executed, and quartered, according to the statement of the *Four Masters*; but as related in the *History of Carrickfergus*, and as extracted from its ancient and contemporary records, he was executed in that town in 1575;<sup>1</sup> he was murdered in 1574 or 1575, another most competent authority avers,<sup>2</sup> so that there is thus the same contradiction as to the time and manner of his death as there is with respect to the events of the few weeks which preceded the catastrophe in the Castle of Belfast. His character, as revealed in the *State Papers*, cannot be taken as other than that of an able and enterprising man, both in a civil and military capacity, considering the age in which he lived; nor is there anything to impeach his conduct for trustworthiness in his relations to the Government, if we set aside the accounts of the Earl of Essex of his duplicity and treachery in his latter days. He was ambitious; he wrongfully encroached on the rights of his relatives; he may have exhibited, and did exhibit, considerable fickleness and instability of character in his frequent submissions and as sudden outbreaks, as if torn by contending influences. The two English invaders seem entirely

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<sup>1</sup> The variance between the statements of the *Four Masters*—an authority accepted as undoubtedly authentic by eminent Irish scholars of the present day—and that of the Earl of Essex, as well as that in the *Lives of the Earls of Essex*, and the *Records of Carrickfergus*, with respect to the circumstances attending the capture and death of Brian O'Neill, is so great as to leave an opening for discussion and conflicting opinions on the perplexing story, and to create a strong desire for such farther research as might elicit the actual truth.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Reeves in the *Genealogy of the O'Neills* in the *Montgomery Manuscripts*, published by the Rev. George Hill, p. 14.

to have shaken his faith and confidence in the Government. Few would or could have failed to oppose both by every means. They came to dispossess him; for with whatever fair words their intentions may have been glossed over—"to plant," to place the land in the occupation of others, and themselves to rule over it as chiefs or nobles, was the object most desired, or which at least he believed would be the final result.<sup>1</sup> Even Sir Thomas Smith, an upright man, must have anticipated the same consequences, as about the time his son first appeared in the country he writes in a sanguine and vain-glorious style to Burghley—"800 or 1000 men are ready to daunt the enemy and cost the Queen nothing. . . . The little book my son sent out was evil done . . . still no other way appeared of making the enterprise publicly known, neither of

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<sup>1</sup> This is part of the covenant between the Queen and the Earl of Essex, on 9th July, 1573:—

"Where her Highness in consideration of service, and surrender of his title to 800 marks of the Earl of Marche's lands had given to the Earl the moiety of the Seigniories of Claneyboy the Earl covenanted, before Michaelmas then next ensuing in person to take his journey into the said country with 200 horsemen and 400 footmen at his own charges and to continue the same for two years from the said Feast. After two years the Earl shall continue like number of soldiers at his charges as her Majesty shall keep, so that the number exceed not 600 soldiers.

"The Queen will send 200 horsemen and 400 footmen under the conduct of the said Earl into the said Seigniories at her charges. . . . Whereas sundry her Majesty's subjects do purpose to adventure in service under conduct of the said Earl for the reducing of the said country at their proper costs, some with horsemen, some with footmen, her Majesty grants that every such person shall have in fee simple for every horseman 400 English acres and for every footman 200 acres paying for every acre 2d English. . . .

"The Country to be divided equally by six commissioners, three to be named by the Queen or the Lord Deputy, and three by the Earl of Essex. . . . they to divide the country and to give names to Towns," &c.

The agreement in full is in the *Carew MSS.*, 1515-1574, pp. 443-44; and the persons to whom the places were allotted, with the names of their future residences in County Antrim, are set forth in detail, in a most interesting paper called "The Earl of Essex's Enterprise for the Recovery of Ulster," by Mr. Hore, in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. ix., p. 245, the substance of which is in the *State Papers*. It and the covenant plainly exhibit the intentions of the adventurers. The latter expresses at the conclusion that "the Earl shall cause his part to be inhabited, after division, with such number of English birth as her Majesty doth her part, so as her Majesty's number pass not 1000 persons."



us having tenants or great countries to gather the necessary force with persuasions and offers of participation in profits and honour to allure to him whom he could ; has got a good number ; MacPhelim is afraid, but shall not the Queen dispose of her own? . . . the Lord Deputy will be eased of the northern Irish and Scotch." Essex and his friends had the same hopes and views. The circuit of the county of Antrim, by the coast and the Bann, and round again to Belfast, was allotted to what might be called the gentlemen undertakers of those days, and great encouragement was given in the way of rents and privileges to soldiers and husbandmen to accompany them and inhabit the land. Sir Brian O'Neill<sup>1</sup> and his countrymen knew all this, and it would have been contrary to all their thoughts and habits to have submitted passively to it. He, the leading chief, now disappears from the scene. Belfast, which was as yet but little more than a shadow, the far stretching pastures, the bright streams, the hunting hills, the glorious woods of

<sup>1</sup> The genealogy of Sir Brian, shortly stated, and a representation of the seat or chair in which he and his ancestors had been crowned or inaugurated for numerous generations, will appropriately in this note terminate his direct history.

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|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Brian MacFelim O'Neill, chief of Clannaboy, and senior of the Kinel Owen. | 5. John.                   |
| 2. John, his eldest son.   | 6. Charles.                |
| 3. Felim Duv.  | 7. John.                   |
| 4. Brian.  | 8. Charles Henry St. John. |
|  | 9. John Bruce.             |

—From *Annals of the Four Masters*, vol. v., p. 1678.

From another source the genealogy of the O'Neill is thus drawn up :—

- |   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Hugh O'Neill, from whom the Tyrone O'Neills were descended. | Neal, Lord of Fevagh. |
| Hugh Meath (?) O'Neill, King of Ulster 1122.                | M'Phelim.             |
| Daniel.   | M'Bryan.              |
| Hugh Buye of Clandeboy.                                     | M'Shane.              |
| Brian.  | M'Phelim.             |
| Henry.  | Shane M'Bryan.        |
| Medaugh Longhead.   | Felix.                |
| Brian Ballagh.  | John.                 |
| Con.  | Charles.              |
| Hugh Buye.  | Charles.              |

—From MS. Pedigree of the O'Neills in the *M'Skimin Papers*.



Clannaboye, which were abiding realities, knew him no more ; and yet the name, so long identified with Antrim and with Ulster, was so rooted in the soil, that here at least, though shorn of vast and fertile tracts of the principality of the old days, it still continues. Great portions of the estates were granted, in

The above skeleton genealogies are probably as correct in the main as can now be ascertained. From Sir Brian M'Phelim it is likely to be true, and the collateral descents, as collected by Dr. O'Donovan, are in the *Annals of the Four Masters* at the reference quoted.

The chair here represented was found about the year 1755 among the ruins of Castlereagh. It was brought from that place by Mr. Stewart Banks, Sovereign of Belfast, and built into the wall of the Butter Market or Weigh-house, at the lower end of Waring Street. It remained in that situation for a considerable time, being used as a seat, or some such "base purpose," by the weighmaster. The building requiring some enlargement or repair, the seat was thrown down among the rubbish, and would probably have been broken up, but that a workman—appreciating differently from his fellows the interest and value which attached to it—saved it from destruction, and conveyed it to



INAUGURATION CHAIR OF THE O'NEILLS  
OF CLANNABOYE.

his house. Many went to see this chair where it stood, long years ago, near the then almost "untrodden ways" near Lancaster Street, in a yard in which street it had been placed. A drawing of it was made in 1832 by the father of the writer, which, with the above particulars, was sent to the late Dr. Petrie, of Dublin, by whom the entire was published in the *Dublin Penny Journal* of that year, p. 208. This chair is all in one piece, and of solid whinstone ; the back is higher than that of an ordinary chair, the seat perhaps a little lower. It was thought desirable to reproduce it here, so kindred to the subject under consideration, because it was perhaps the last ancient relic of the great O'Neills of Clannaboye, and because it has been lost for ever to Belfast—which would have been its most appropriate resting-place—having been purchased many years since by a discerning archæologist from the county of Sligo, and taken to that part of Ireland, where, no doubt, it still remains. Such chairs are rare—perhaps that of Castlereagh is unique in all Ireland. "In 1602," says Moryson, "Lord Mountjoy brake down the chair wherein the O'Neills were wont to be created, being of stone, planted in the open field." There is also, as a fellow-picture to the chair, represented beside it, a sepulchral urn, of considerable elegance of form and much ornamentation, which contained, there is reason to think, the ashes of an O'Neill of distinction, possibly a direct ancestor of Sir Brian MacPhelim,

1607, to Shane, eldest son of Sir Brian; and an O'Neill in descent from him still possesses the ancient Castle of Edenduff-carriek.

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in ages far away. It was found at Altigarron, or at the place known by the name of Carn Shane Buidhe, the Cairn of Yellow John, which is four or five miles from Belfast, on Divis Mountain. The name was in every respect a distinctive appellation of the O'Neills.

This beautiful urn is 5 inches high,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  inches in diameter at the broadest part, and 6 inches across the mouth.



SUPPOSED CINERARY URN OF AN O'NEILL OF CLANNABOYE.

## CHAPTER IV.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

THE Earl of Essex had been made Governor-General of Ulster. He had been granted the moiety of Clannaboye, Queen Elizabeth herself being his fellow-partner. He had arranged with Sir Thomas Smith for the possession of the most desirable and beautiful places within the district; and at Belfast a portion at least of his time must have been spent. Though he possessed great talent and energy, and was accorded such extensive powers, the undertaking on the whole, so far as Clannaboye entered into it, was an entire failure. The causes of this have been visible in the preceding narrative, to which must be added the perplexity, disappointment, and varying counsels of the Queen. On March 14th, 1575, the Privy Council inform the Lord Deputy that “the Queen is fully resolved to go through with the enterprise of Ulster, and to follow the plot of the Earl of Essex.”<sup>1</sup> On July 16th of the same year she wrote to Essex the following letter:—

“We have heretofore signified that we intended to proceed no farther in the enterprise of Ulster for a time; but that you our cousin of Essex should make some countenance with your forces upon Tirlogh Lenoghe and the Irishry, until they were reduced to some good stay and composition. We now understand that you have agreed and compounded with him and are long since marched into Clandeboy to reduce the inhabitants and Sarleboy to some honourable agreement, which we hope by this time you have performed, so as we shall not need to be at such great charges. Therefore our pleasure is that our whole garrison shall be reduced to 1600 soldiers. Sufficient wards to be left both in the new fort now by you the Earl of Essex made at the Blackwater, and also at Belfast, or such other

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, Carew, 1575–1588, p. 1.

places in Clandeboy and at Knockefergus until the coming of Sir Henry Sidney thither to be there as our Deputy."

These communications give in brief the condition of the country, as well as the contradictory resolutions with which Essex had to contend. Sir Henry Sidney arrived in Ireland, as Lord Deputy, in September, 1575; being, he says, "the third time he had undertaken the thankless charge." He esteemed the Earl of Essex, and was disposed to promote his interests, but it was impossible now to restore him to his lost station in Clannaboye. He was in treaty for Islandmagee as a permanent grant, his desire with regard to which Sir Henry Sidney promoted. He succeeded in obtaining this choice spot, though it afterwards passed away to another, leaving to him only the barony of Farney, in the county of Monaghan, which is still possessed by his collateral descendants.

The Earl of Essex had not lost sight of his favourite project of establishing a corporate town at Belfast. Early in the spring of this year (1575) a desire for buildings and fortifications in this part of Ulster again appears; and though Belfast is not specially named in the following extract, it cannot be reasonably doubted that it was one of the places "elsewhere in Clannaboye" kept in view, and to which it was intended to apply some of the "necessaries" here enumerated.

"You shall also shew the Earl that towards the provisions of certain necessities for the buildings to be made there, and to the fortifications; and namely, for certain frames of timber<sup>1</sup> for houses of stowage, and of handmills, and a hoy, and a frigate, and of iron, lead, and all manner of tools for works, with many other particular things whereof you can make recital, there is warrant made for £1000."

Specific allusion, however, is made to Belfast, a few weeks

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<sup>1</sup> This apparently had reference to the renewing of the enterprise, about which there was still some uncertainty. The extent to which the appliances for buildings and fortifications were brought into operation cannot be more particularly obtained; but the above passage, or one of similar import, has probably been that which gave rise to a rumour or tradition, that the Earl of Essex had brought over from England at this time the "frames" of a number of houses to begin the building of the town of Belfast. The statement cannot be authenticated.

later, in a letter from the Privy Council to the Earl, wherein they say—

“Whereas you determine to build rather at Belfast than at Blackwater, her Majesty’s pleasure is that you should advertise what the charges of the building will amount to, as also what convenient numbers of horsemen and footmen you think requisite to be placed as well there, as at Knockfergus or elsewhere in Ulster.”

The Earl—now subdued by losses and misfortunes, and seeing his larger projects impracticable—in a more moderate tone says—

“I resolve not to build but at one place; namely, at Belfast; and that of little charge; a small town there will keep the passage, relieve Knockfergus with wood, and horsemen being laid *there* shall command the plains of Clandeboy, and with footmen may keep the passage open between that and the Newrie, and keep those of Kiltulo, Killmarlin, and the Dufferin in obedience, and may be victualled at pleasure by sea, without danger of Scot or pirate.”

The expected “charges of the buildings” at Belfast, as asked for, are unluckily not mentioned.

All this proves that no town of regular construction was begun here by the Earl of Essex. This was near the end of his career; and in his now vain desire for building at this place, he complains that the money spent in some ineffectual measure, which he does not specifically name, “would have built a small town at Belfast.” That something was done cannot well be doubted; but nothing certainly of any value or importance either in the way of town or fort.

Though now in such untoward circumstances, the Earl of Essex had still both the influence and the inclination to settle the Irish occupiers, if possible, in peace over the country, which, he had himself at one time hoped to govern. Almost immediately after the death of Sir Brian, he informs Lord Burghley that “two of Brian’s Kinsmen are competitors for the Captaincy,” the alleged treachery of the latter not having abrogated the right of his descendants to the inheritance. O’Neills continued to rule in Clannaboy, absorbing the entire

under the loose relations formerly prevalent, living in their old rude semi-warlike manner, paying tribute of so many beeves (almost the only kind of property which they possessed), and contracting to maintain a certain number of horsemen and footmen to serve the Queen against her enemies. Yet so unsettled or indefinite was this kind of fidelity, that before the year had expired it was broken through. In November, 1575, Sir Henry Sidney, the Lord Deputy, records in one of his letters, when describing his progress through the country, that at his passage over the water at Belfast he was “offered Skirmishe by Mac-Neill Brian Ertaugh.” This was probably the same contest referred to, also in 1575, under the equally brief form, “that an engagement took place at a bare site, called Belfast, between the Lord Deputy and Brian O’Neill.” So easily were peaceable terms disturbed, as this seems to have been the same O’Neill who entered into a strict treaty with the Earl of Essex a few months before.<sup>1</sup> Arrangements, hoped to be conducive to order and good government, occupied the attention of the Earl of Essex during the short remainder of his life. He died in Dublin in 1576, and his name thenceforth ceases to be heard of in connection with Clannaboye.<sup>2</sup> The relations established by him

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<sup>1</sup> The treaty, binding and precise in language, is inserted in Appendix No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Speed introduces, in his description of the counties of Ulster, a brief account of the career and ending of the Earl of Essex, incorporated with which are some general remarks of local interest.

Describing Antrim, he says, “Antrim so called of Antrim, a base townelet of small reckoning. . . . This Bay of Knoe-fergus is well inhabited and more frequented than the rest on this coast by reason of the commodious haven. . . . Hard by it lieth, the Nether Clane-boy which also was the habitation of the O’Neales. . . . Queen Elizabeth granted this Claneboy unto Walter D’Eureux Earle of Essex who crossed over the seas hither, and I wot not whether under a goodly colour of honour (for chosen hee was Governour of Ulster and Mareschal of Ireland) hee was by the politticke practise of some Courteours finely packed awaie into a Country alwaies rebellious and untamed. But whiles with the expense of a mighty masse of money hee went about to reduce it to good order, hee was by untimely death taken out of the world, leaving unto all good men a wonderful misse of himselfe, and this country unto the O’Neales and Brian Carragh . . . who since that time have gone together by the cares and committed many murders one upon another about the Sovereignty of this Seignory.”



with the Irish chiefs—not alone with the English Government, but among themselves—produced their usual results. “The bare site” of Belfast, its broken Castle, the wild lands of Lower or North Clannaboye, which “extended from the Ravel in the north to the Lagan in the South,”<sup>1</sup> fell chiefly to the lot of Sir Brian’s family; while to Neal O’Neil Upper Clannaboye was apportioned, which meant the County Down possessions of the race. This Neal was father of Con O’Neill of Castlereagh, who was doomed to fall in the next generation before undertakers more fortunate or more powerful than Smith and Essex.

Sir Henry Sidney, while he continued Lord Deputy, acted with great activity and discretion. Still the charge, if not “thankless,” was harassing, and adverse to improvement or real pacification. The sons and nephews of Sir Brian were at constant strife. The English Government continued to hold Carrickfergus, and likewise, in some form, Belfast. The former place contained in 1577 a population of 200, and was occupied by a garrison of only 127 men; from which we may certainly infer that the number of people here was too small to render it worthy the designation of either town or village. It is stated that ninety-three soldiers were sufficient for all the out-garrisons, very few of whom were enough for the obscure Castle of Belfast. It is true that in this year the North was represented to be “in greater quiet than it had been for long time, Turlough Lynagh having come in”—one of those temporary lulls which smoothed for the moment the constant wars of the age of Queen Elizabeth.

Sir John Perrot was appointed Lord Deputy in 1583, and must have visited Belfast the following year. He was acquainted with the family disputes of the O’Neills, and made for them what he perhaps thought to be satisfactory compositions. He knew that Clannaboye was divided among them under the unfixed law of the time, and states that “Con M’Neil Oge aspiring to the whole government of Clandhuboy by the old custom of Tanist, I concluded that he should have the Upper

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<sup>1</sup> This is the definition of the extent of North Clannaboye given by Dr. Reeves, *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down and Connor*, p. 344.



Clandhughboy, and Shane M'Brian and Hugh Oge the Nether." This appears to have been a confirmation of the arrangement with Essex. Two years after, their possessions were surrendered to the Queen, and re-granted to them to be held by Knight service. They promised more horsemen and footemen, more cows and oxen, and to do every thing befitting the great nobles of a powerful and gracious monarch. But nothing could pacify the family strifes, or introduce settled habits. In an account of Ulster, written at this time, it is said, "North Clandeboy is given by Letters Patent to Sir Brian M'Phelim's sons, the Queen's pensioners; notwithstanding by a new division lately made by the now Lord Deputy the one moiety thereof is allotted to the rule of Hugh M'Phelim's sons, whereby great dissension doth depend between them and great slaughter on both parties are often committed." Yet Sir John Perrot was thought to have settled all disputes; and a royal letter<sup>1</sup> congratulates him on his reducing the chieftains and captains of Ulster to a general obedience—a project never successful before, though oftentimes attempted—and names those members of the O'Neill sept with whom he had concluded a peace. The Queen was even so conciliatory as to direct that the clause of "saving to us our rights"<sup>2</sup> be forborne, and not expressed; and desired, as her further pleasure, "that there be no exception or saving where the title of the parties which surrendered is by sufficient proof before you and our Council found

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<sup>1</sup> 20th January, 27th Elizabeth, in Chancery Rolls.

<sup>2</sup> The authority for this statement, and a few more here set down, is an elaborate legal paper—apparently a general review of both sides in the great case of Donegall *versus* Templemore, which occurred some years ago, and brought to light so much connected with the O'Neills and their ancient rights and possessions. It was considered that the claims arising from these old grants to them, by English tenure, descended to the present possessors of their estates; and, thereupon, great litigation arose as to the ownership of portions of the beds of the River Lagan and Lough of Belfast—of what had been once mere slob land, or covered with the sea, but had become, with reclamations consequent on the wonderful increase of Belfast, of great value. This is merely a popular observation regarding that great case, which involved many points of interest concerning the O'Neills, and which neither law nor archæology could place on an indisputable basis.

to be good and true." The final issue of all these misty and entangling debates was, that Sir Brian's sons obtained that part of Lower Clannaboye south of the Main Water, including the estates of Shane's Castle—ever since so called from Shane or John, the eldest son of that unhappy chief—doubtless also the old ground around Belfast, and its Castle, if they could retain the latter against the counter claims of the Castlereagh O'Neills. Shane M'Brian, the eldest of the County Antrim family, is described as "a modest man, and one who speaks English."

For some time after these endeavours to settle the O'Neills in amity, it is not possible to ascertain to what party the Castle of Belfast really belonged. The situation of the place itself, in the judgment of Perrot, as well as in that of Essex and all others, was estimated at its true value; but neither it nor the Castle, so far as is known, drew any attention even from so practical a man as Sir John Perrot, beyond his well-known recommendation of the locality as a suitable one for shipbuilding. The probability is that the Castle was in the possession of the Government, as in 1594, when plans were being laid to meet the great rebellion of the Earl of Tyrone, it is declared that, besides the more important garrisons mentioned, "wards of 20 or 30 men in a place are very meet, as at Belfast and Castle Toome."

In letters in the *State Papers* relating to other subjects, detached remarks occur sometimes respecting Belfast and its Castle, which may be noted.

Thus—"1593-4, Mar. 14. Carrickfergus. Ensign John Dallway to Sr H. Bagenall. To keep secret the information sent relative to the business of the Seneschal O'Hagan at *Belfast*."

Incloses; "Examination of Shane M'Brian O'Neill. The Earl of Tyrone sent O'Hagan to Belfast to have the said Shane to become his man, and join him against the Queen."

"1596. Ap<sup>l</sup> 22. Captain Cha<sup>s</sup> Eggerton to the Lord Deputy.  
 . . . . Has put Neale M'Hugh in the Castle of Belfast and appointed him four shot forth of this garrison. This will be a great gall to the enemy, being upon the passage between the Clandeboyes."

The two more explanatory and valuable letters succeeding partly show the meaning of these mysterious hints and secret

meetings. The Earl of Tyrone was in rebellion, and his policy was to attract to his party the Clannaboye O'Neills, his kinsmen and natural allies; but the latter were at strife among themselves, undetermined which side undisguisedly to join, striving to gain from the Government in the confusion personal advantages. At any rate, if this be not a correct version of the situation, the letters following will illustrate the relations subsisting in 1596 between the Government and the O'Neills, and the discord of the latter among themselves:—

“Charles Eggarton (or Egerton) to the Lord Deputy, dated Carrickfergus 27 May 1596.

“ . . . Lastlie y<sup>t</sup> maie please yo<sup>r</sup> L. Therle hath written a lre unto me for the deliverie of the Castle of Belfast unto the owner in such case as I founde yt, alleading that ther is lres sent from yo<sup>r</sup> L. and the rest commanding me to withdraw the ward from thence, and w<sup>th</sup> all in his said lre doth charge me that the said Castle was taken since the generall peace, the w<sup>ch</sup> was put into Neal MacHughe's hands, at least X daies before Shane MacBryan made his humble submission at Dundalk. I have sent yo<sup>r</sup> L. lre to Cap. Mansell touching that Castle, but tall this daie since my first lres unto yo<sup>r</sup> L. I have not receaved anie informations from yo<sup>r</sup> L. what course I shall farther take w<sup>th</sup> the said Castle of Bellfast. I have answered Therle that the ward that was first put therein was Neal M'Hugh McPhelim himself and his people w<sup>ch</sup> was done at least X or Xij daies before the generall peace, since w<sup>ch</sup> tyme I sent no soldio<sup>rs</sup> toward the Castle, but only to guard our boats w<sup>ch</sup> wee sent unto the wood for fewell, by reason they have been a long tyme most grieviously spoiled ther by Shane M'Brian's people. Thus craving most humblie yo<sup>r</sup> L. directions what shall be done with the Castle of Bellfest, the w<sup>ch</sup> hath cost some money in fortifying and is made in reasonable good sort to be garded.”<sup>1</sup> . . .

“Neale M'Hugh M'Phelmay O'Neale to the Lord Deputy. Dated Knockfergus 28 July 1596.

“ . . . if it fall out to be peace my most humble sute is to have thone halfe of Clandeboie w<sup>th</sup> the Castle of Bellfast, and that

<sup>1</sup> Original MS. Letter, *State Papers*, Ireland, June 8, 1596.

Charles Eggarton was Mayor of Carrickfergus this year (1596), and was a military man in command there.—*Records of Carrickfergus*.

halfe of Clandeboie next adioyning to Knockfergus and the said Castle, the w<sup>ch</sup> I the rather most humblie crave in respect that I depend onely upon Hs (Highness), and therefore do desire to be so much the more nearer unto the subjection of her Ma<sup>ts</sup> Lawes and forces the w<sup>ch</sup> thorough my dutifull behavio<sup>r</sup> I trust the same shalbe alwaies my comfort, relief, and strength: Secondly, my humble sute is if it shall fall out to be warres, *the w<sup>ch</sup> I greatly suspect* wilbe, having manie strong reasons in my owne Knowledge to expect no lesse intended by the Rebells, that then it will please yo<sup>r</sup> L. to graunt me paie for XXV horse and some pecon for myself, and that the ward of Bellfast maie aide and defend myne and my followers goods, as occasion shall serve in time of neede, and with the helpe of Almightye God and her Hs forces I shall do her Ma<sup>tie</sup> better service in this warre than yet hath been done in Clandeboie this XX yeares.”<sup>1</sup>

The person meant by “Therle” seems to have been Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone. The governor of Carrickfergus still held command over the Castle, but knew not how to settle for the best between the disputatious relatives, one of whom—who writes with as much indifference of “the Rebells” as an English captain—if his protestations were to be relied on, and his requests granted, would lend his assistance to the Queen “should it fall out to be war, which he greatly suspected,” or more probably, very well knew. The Clannaboye O'Neills had after this correspondence, contests with the English for possession of Belfast, one of which, in June, 1597, when the war with “the arch traitor,” as the Earl of Tyrone was called, was in full progress, is so remarkable as to deserve a special recital.

“Sir John Chichester was younger brother of that renowned soldier and statesman, Sir Arthur Chichester. At what period Sir John first served in Ireland I have been unable to ascertain, but he was knighted by Lord Deputy Sir William Russel in 1594, and Sir Ralph Lane, the Irish Muster Master-General, in a letter to Lord High Treasurer Burghley, in September, 1595, writes:—‘I canne not omytte to certefye yo<sup>r</sup> lp our Sergeant

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<sup>1</sup> Original MS. Letter, *State Papers*, Ireland, 28th July, 1596.

These two letters are not given here in full; the above are extracts relating directly to Belfast and the general situation.

Maior, Capt<sup>n</sup> John Chycheester, hath carryde himselfe in all services with singulare comendacion.' In the latter part of June, 1597, Sir John was appointed governor of Carrickfergus. It was a most critical period. Tyrone was in the height of his power . . . all the North was in rebellion. . . . Not only the exigency of the time, but the actual state of the garrison of so important a stronghold as Carrickfergus, required a superior and energetic officer. For several months previous to Sir John's appointment, a serious quarrel had existed between Charles Eggerton, constable of Carrickfergus, who had held the post with credit for several years, and Captain Rice Mansell, the Sergeant-Major of the garrison. . . . While these dissensions reigned within, the enemy prevailed without, and Belfast Castle—at that time, however, a comparatively unimportant post—fell into the hands of Shane M'Bryan.<sup>1</sup> If the quarrel between Eggerton and Mansell caused the loss of Belfast Castle, it also lets us know how the event occurred; for the wife of Eggerton, being in London soliciting the Queen's interference in her husband's favour, received a letter from one Anthony Dearinge, dated Dublin, 27th June, 1597, which thus relates the capture of it:—

'One ensigne Pullen had the gyfte of Belfast Castell, whoe in cullor of this charge, robbed the people, and took their gudes round aboute him, to mayntayne his drunkennesse. And being druncke from his chardge at Knockfergus, and a carswose sent hym by Shane M'Bryan—to loke to his chardges wolde not forsake his wyne poots to serve her ma<sup>ty</sup>: but lyinge still at Knockfergus drinkinge, his owne man, named John Aloylon, gave the Castell of Belfaste to the enemye the XVIII daie June. And all the Inglishe men in the ward were hanged, and their throats cutt, and their bowells cutt oute of ther bellyes by Shane M'Bryan. And this castell was, by meanes of Capt<sup>n</sup> Thornton, with her mat<sup>ies</sup> shipp and soldiers taken the next daie. And nowe our newe comandars, by meanes of their prayeing the counterie have putt all in rebellion in such sorte that they are cept

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<sup>1</sup> This was the eldest son of Sir Brian M'Phelim O'Neill, and if he were the "modest" man, as described in Sir John Perrot's day, his immediate action in Belfast Castle hardly bore out the title.

in on everie side, and Shane M'Bryan, and Bryan M'Cartt, and the Slogh M'Connells camp at Carmonye in the teeth of our garrisons.' "

Such was the state of affairs when Sir John Chichester assumed the government of Carrickfergus; but, by a letter to Burghley, giving an account of his stewardship, little more than two months afterwards, we learn how soon, with the courage and energy of his name and race, he set about retrieving the disastrous consequences of his predecessor's misconduct. Though Dearinge states that Belfast Castle was retaken by the English "the next daie," yet in all probability they had not occupied it, for Sir John writes that he found it in the enemy's possession, and thus relates how he captured it:—

"Being a place which standeth 8 miles from Kerogfergus, and on the river, wher the sea ebbes and flowes, so that botes may be landed within a butte shotte of the said Castell, for the recovery whereof I made choice that it should be one of my first workes. And on the XI daie of Julie following attempted the same with some 100 men, which I transported thether in botes by sea, and indeed our coming was so unlooked for by them as it asked us no long time before we tooke the place without anie losse to us, and put those wee founde in yt to the sworde."

The letter proceeds to describe two other successful encounters he had with the enemy, one of which was the capture and burning of the Castle of Edenduffcarrick, and then relates—

"Theis services I presume touched them so nearly as that since, Shane M'Bryan, Neale M'Hugh, Neale M'Brian Fertaugh, which are lordes of both the Clandeboyes, with their followers are come in, and have repaired with me to Dublin, ther submittinge themselves to her Mat<sup>y</sup> and the State, being contented to put in as pledges, for their future loyaulties, the two sonnes of the said Shane M'Bryan, and one of every Sept of the contre besides, which I trust yor lp shall find to be a perfect freeing of these partes."

Sir John Chichester was himself killed in the November of the same year, in a conflict with Sir James Macdonnell near Carrickfergus.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The account of the taking and retaking of Belfast Castle, and its results, will be found in an article in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. v., pp. 188-



The position of the English in Ulster was now truly perilous, and it, as well as the other provinces in Ireland, is described in a lengthened Report submitted to the Council and debated on in November, 1597, the part in which Belfast and the vicinity generally are introduced being as follows :—

“All the late rebellions in Ireland have had their beginnings in Ulster . . . and we have now to report that there is no part freed from the poison of this great rebellion, and no country or the chieftain of a country, being Irish, whom the capital traitor Tyrone hath not corrupted, and drawn into combination with him, so that from sea to sea beyond Dundalk, namely from Karrickfargus in Clandeboye to Ballishannon in Tyrconnell there is no part that standeth for her Majesty except Karrickfargus, the Newrie, the fort of Blackwater, and the Cavan in the Breny, which are held with strong and chargeable garrisons to her Majesty ; besides three or four petty castles in Clandeboyes and Lecall, namely, Belfast, Edendoghe Carricke, Olderfleet, and Dondrum, all which are maintained by wards. In Clandeboye two of the petty lords Shane M'Bryan, and Neale Oge M'Hugh M'Feolem of the house of the O'Neales made their submission, and are now returned into their countries pardoned, but they are not likely to stand fast longer than will serve their turn.”

This affords sufficient proof that in November, 1597, the Castle of Belfast was a Government possession, and of the opinion held of the fidelity of the O'Neills. If the account be true of the cruelty practised on the occasion of its capture a few months previously as related, it was possibly a revengeful proceeding by Shane M'Bryan for the alleged outrages on his father, his friends, and relatives twenty-three years before by the Earl of Essex in the same castle. The Government at Dublin, in sending Shane home again, “pardoned,” as the official document relates, treated him with a forbearance—from some motive, if they were aware of his conduct when, by his stratagem, he got into the Castle and slaughtered its defenders—which their predecessors did not extend to Sir Brian, his father, for at least more doubtful crimes.

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209. This paper, entitled the “Overthrow of Sir John Chichester,” was written by Mr. Pinkerton, and in his very best manner. It is very long, but never fails to keep up its interest. Nothing is extracted from it but the very small portion bearing directly on the object of this work.

The public and private documents concur very nearly in their relation of the events. Sir John Chichester's conduct was no better than that of Shane MacBrian. The Clannaboye O'Neills joined with the Earl of Tyrone; they appear in the abortive treaties entered into for the establishment of peace, and they were of sufficient importance to be named as accompanying the Earl to his meetings with the English Commissioners near Dundalk for that purpose. Their leanings were always with their countrymen, when any prospect of success appeared, but the strong fortress of Carrickfergus in the very heart of their country, and the isolated nature of that country itself, restrained their inclinations and kept them in reluctant subjection.

The war still continued, and in favour of the Earl of Tyrone. The Queen in 1598, almost in consternation, writes to the Lords Justices, the Lord Deputy, and Council—

“Although we have forborne to write many letters to you since these late dangerous alterations in Ireland we have sent over great supplies to our excessive charge; yet we receive naught else but news of fresh losses and calamities. Although you have the great number of 9000 men we do not only see the northern traitor untouched at home, and range where else he pleased, but the provincial rebels in every province, by such as he can spare, enabled to give law to our provincial governors.”<sup>1</sup>

To stay this “rabble of base kerne,” as she very erroneously styles her Irish enemies, she sent over the next year, with ample powers, Robert Devereux, Earl of Essex, the son of him who in past times had made himself so conspicuous in Ulster, declaring that she had committed to his charge “a royal army, paid, furnished, and provided in other sort than any king of this land hath done before.”<sup>2</sup> Minute instructions are given as to his course of procedure, and in a paper, endorsed—“A general computation of the Irish forces in rebellion when the Earl of Essex arrived in Ireland, April, 1599,” a review is given of the country, and the strength of the foes whom he was to meet; and in the precise list which follows of the names of those in re-

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, Carew, 1589-1600, p. 284. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 1589-1600, p. 293.

bellion,<sup>1</sup> that of "Neal M'Brian Fertaghe, Lord of the Upper Clandebouys, with a force of 80 foot and 50 horse," occurs as the very first. Shane MacBrian, to whom, in his relation to Belfast, more interest is naturally attached, is absent from the roll of rebels—perhaps still remembering with dread his constrained journey to Dublin, two years before, in the train of Sir John Chichester. He was now on the English side. There are, however, in the list several breaks or names obscurely expressed, some one of which may disguise that of Shane M'Brian.<sup>2</sup> It is certain, at the same time, that the Queen did not mention to Essex that he might pass the lands of the Clannaboye O'Neills to others, as she did in the case of five persons considered the capital traitors, so that they must still have been looked on with some degree of favour.

The Castle of Belfast was in the hands of the English, sheltered by Carrickfergus, and a mere dependency on it.<sup>3</sup> It has been described at this period as owned by Sir Ralph Lane. This is in a degree correct. He held it in *custodiam*, that is, in his charge or custody, as a kind of tenant at will, to surrender his trust when a more important owner received the grant by a certain tenure. He was one of the most active and extraordinary characters of this enterprising age. His ostensible occupation was that of Muster Master-General, but nothing connected with the affairs

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, Carew, 1589–1600, p. 299.

<sup>2</sup> There is after all little doubt that this was the fact, as in another list of the force under the Earl of Tyrone, some short time previously—namely, in December, 1598—the two Clannaboyes mustered 120 horse and 300 foot, under the command of Shane M'Brian, Neale M'Hugh, Neale M'Brian Erto, and Owen M'Hughe; who were all the representatives and chiefs of the Clannaboye O'Neills.

<sup>3</sup> That this is so is proved by a letter, June 14th, 1598, from James Byrt to Sec. Fenton, wherein he says, "This toun (Carrickfergus) is besieged by 800 Scots, and Belfast is in danger;" and declaring, in continuation, that "The enemi hath ever since they weare heere layd hard seage to Belfast, and Capten Atherton is in this towne making merry w<sup>th</sup> pte off his men, so that we doe greatly dowl that place will miscarry." (*S. P.*, Ireland, July 7, 1598.) This was certainly a loose way of carrying on war, and Captain Atherton's desertion of his post, if true (though the information was possibly the result of jealousy or personal animosity), may have led to another temporary change of the ownership of the Castle.

of the country escaped his observation, and there was scarcely any office, however elevated or obscure, which did not come within the range of his desires. He sat at the Council Board with the greatest personages in the kingdom; he accompanied the Lord Deputy in his expeditions through the country; he projected the building of towns and castles, made extensive plans for the reformation of this distracted kingdom; but he also condescended to ask for the office of chief bell-ringer of it, paying a red rose by way of rent, and for the surveyorship of the parish clerks of Ireland; and he obtained both. He was ambitious to acquire the government of some important place, and had applied for that of Carrickfergus, after the death of Sir John Chichester. Even a *custodiam* grant would satisfy him, not knowing what possibly might arise out of it when war ceased. His wishes with respect to his general claim were gratified, and he received, under the limited form specified, the Castle of Belfast in 1598. The interest of Shane M'Brian was here diminished; it had, it may be supposed, entirely ceased, or was not recognised when this grant was made to Lane. What benefit the latter derived from it is not known, nor whether he ever even appeared around the old walls. His duties may have called him into the neighbourhood, but real possession and benefit would have needed peace and a more vigorous hand.

The entire failure of this second Earl of Essex in Ulster, and his own fatal end, are known to all. He had appointed Sir Arthur Chichester Governor of Carrickfergus and the two Clan-na-boyes, in April, 1599, and to none better fitted for it could the important charge have been entrusted. Lord Mountjoy, who succeeded in breaking the power of the Earl of Tyrone, had in Sir Arthur an able coadjutor, the object and duty of the latter being to meet or hem in O'Neill from the County Antrim, and to reach him by the waters of Lough Neagh. Notices in abundance of the war of the Earl of Tyrone are in the *Calendars of State Papers*, some of which were written by Sir Arthur Chichester himself. Belfast, only in the indirect manner already related, had but little participation in it, being in a manner guarded by

its situation, except from casual local struggles. The Earl of Tyrone intrigued with those of his name who owned it or claimed it, but there is no account that when he broke out in open rebellion he ever trusted himself within it, though in other years the locality was familiar to him. His downfall and the death of Elizabeth were nearly coincident. His great opponent Sir Arthur Chichester, whose history now opens, was favourably known to the Queen a short time before her death, and his merit and talents fully appreciated. A letter from Cecil to Lord Mountjoy, 19th October, 1601,<sup>1</sup> hints in no very unmistakable terms at the propriety of appointing him governor of the entire province of Ulster—a scheme, he says, “whereto I find her Majesty sufficiently inclinable and especially in liking with Sir Arthur Chichester.” The future Lord Deputy’s proceedings at this the origination of his great career were not always favourably received, as in the same long letter which suggests the propriety of his appointment to the office of sole governor of Ulster the following words of more local interest also occur:—

“Sir Arthur Chichester likewise hath been overtaken, not sticking to take in one Con O’Neale, that was but son to a father living in the Ardes, and yet Sir Arthur stooke not to give him 20s a day sterling, for which favour he so well requited him as he betrayed all the trust that was committed to him; and now that Sir Arthur hath recovered him again he makes dainty to hang him before he hath your lordship’s warrant.”

Con O’Neill is elsewhere described as the Queen’s pensioner, and if he received payment in reward of his fealty and submission, and was yet disaffected or not loyal, “betraying all the trust that was committed to him,” his conduct deserves the highest condemnation, while Chichester is blamed for his clemency in this instance, a quality for the possession of which he has got no credit from recent writers. Con O’Neill’s position in 1601 is distinct enough. He lived at Castlereagh, and if he had been wise and prudent might have continued to live there, and transmitted his estates to his descendants. The County Antrim O’Neills also retained, as has been related, much of the inherit-

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers*, 1601–1603, p. 153.

ance of their fathers in a disputed sort of way, while the Castle of Belfast, to which both branches probably laid claim—Con's right in the eyes of his friends and countrymen being, it is likely, thought the better, as he is actually called at this time Con of Belfast—was in actual possession of the Government, and Ralph Lane still its owner in *custodiam*.<sup>1</sup>

While Con O'Neill thus resided at Castlereagh, events connected with him and Belfast are related which cannot but awaken curiosity, as seemingly contradictory to the evidence that the town entirely dates its existence from the time of its possession by Sir Arthur Chichester. The matter referred to<sup>2</sup> is the well-known narrative that O'Neill, having "a grand debauch" at Castlereagh with his friends and retainers, probably not an unfrequent occurrence, sent his men to Belfast with "runlets" to purchase wine there; but the soldiers in the town attacked, beat, and abused them, and, worst of all, took possession of the wine. This so enraged Con that he ordered them to return to the town to revenge this great affront. They did so, and in the scuffle a soldier was killed, and several of the combatants on both sides wounded. O'Neill was in consequence declared guilty of levying war against the State, and imprisoned like a common felon in Carrickfergus.

This melancholy downfall from the days when his forefathers contended with the Lord Deputy or others of high station, ultimately sealed his fate as possessor of Southern Clannaboye. The story is familiar to most readers—how James Hamilton united with Montgomery to save him from possible death and utter worldly ruin, by rescuing him from prison, by guaranteeing

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Pinkerton has stated that no *custodiam* grant was ever made to Lane, and that the introduction of his name was only a legal subterfuge by Chichester to rebut or complicate the claims, made at an after-time, of Thomas Smith's heirs. This is in a private letter, in which it is said to be but a surmise; no proof is offered in support of it. On the contrary, Lane's ownership of the Castle in *custodiam* is referred to in official papers, leaving no room to doubt its accuracy in a general sense, though certainly no act of ownership or any interference by him with the place is anywhere mentioned.

<sup>2</sup> For this curious narrative at full length, and its results on Con O'Neill's fortunes, see the *Montgomery Manuscripts*, edited by Mr. Hill, p. 21.



to him a portion of his estates in consequence of his favour with the new monarch, provided that Con would relinquish the lion's share; how these proposals were agreed to, leading to the introduction into the country of great undertakers and proprietors, and a multitudinous Scottish population.

These events, similar to many others with which Ireland was familiar, are not historically of so much importance as some questions which the story naturally suggests bearing on the embryo town.

In what state was Belfast in 1603, the era of this event? It may reasonably be argued that if wine could be purchased in it, why not other commodities also? The entire would lead to the inference that a place of trade existed in the locality long before it was incorporated, and that a community, not without order and internal government, had made a footing on the margin of the Farset in those days. Any direct proof of such cannot be obtained, and seeing the entire insignificance of the place when Chichester began to make the town, it must be deemed a subject deserving locally of the strictest investigation. It might have been that some adventurous speculator had established at the little creek, not a dry-goods store only, but one in which generous wine was procurable; and the warlike movements of the preceding years might have made such, in this comparatively quiet corner of the country, a hopeful enterprise.

The narrative also proves that a military garrison occupied the Castle, between whom and the followers and dependants of O'Neill, on Castlereagh Hill above them, a smothered animosity existed, of which this affray is direct proof. Sir Arthur Chichester was in Carrickfergus; the small garrison of Belfast was under his control; he knew the ground, and the time was at hand which was to usher in his permanent possession of it.

Con O'Neill, however, was still in Castlereagh in 1608, and though he could not escape from the grasp of the Hamiltons, Montgomerys, and others who finally swallowed him up, his eldest son Daniel was a distinguished person. He was a soldier and a scholar, always attached to the royal house, married an

English countess, held several offices under the Crown, and Charles the Second, writing of him at his death, says, "He was as honest a man as ever lived." Laud wrote of him to Strafford, telling his history very fairly, and said the estates which he had lost were then worth £12,000 a year. Daniel O'Neill afterwards endeavoured to regain these great estates, but was unsuccessful. His brother was killed in the civil wars; he himself died childless in 1663, and this branch of the O'Neills, so important, so connected with Belfast, lost, with their estates, all historical importance.

## CHAPTER V.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

**THE** name of Chichester becomes closely connected with Belfast from the beginning of the reign of James the First. The Patent to Sir Arthur, dated 5th November, 1603, grants to him “The Castle of Bealfaste or Belfast, with the Appurtenants and Hereditaments, Spiritual and Temporal, situate in the Lower Clandeboye, late in the possession or custody of Sir Ralph Lane Knt., deceased, dated 6th June, 40th Elizabeth.” The Patent goes on to narrate at length the different denominations included in the grant, with a general description of its bounds and mearings.

This grant was not well settled till explanations and difficulties arose. The King wrote to the Earl of Devonshire, Lieutenant of Ireland, and, in his absence, to Sir George Carey, Deputy there, explaining his letter of 8th August, stating that his intention was to invest Sir Arthur as well with the government of Knockfergus, and of all other forts and commands, with the Lough Neagh, and the fee of 13s. 4d. per day for life; but that there is granted also to him and his heirs for ever, “the Castle of Belfast, the Fall, Mylone, Sinament, and the Fishery of the Lagan, to be holden as of our Castle of Knockfergus in free and common socage.” Chichester, at the date of this grant, placed a value on Belfast and the lands around which may well surprise those who have known them only in the days of their greatness. In a letter to Cecil he says the entire grant is only worth £5 in fee simple. His words are without precision.<sup>1</sup> But this low estimate, if meaning

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<sup>1</sup> The exact words used by Chichester when giving expression to this most remarkable statement, which, when looking at Belfast now, is worthy of perpetual remembrance, are—

“I am lykewise an humble sutor that wheras the letters wch the Kinge wrote

£5 per annum only, even with every allowance that can be made on the score of imperfect description, and possibly some insincerity on the part of Sir Arthur, is evidence that the gift of what is now a principality was not then, in the recipient's eyes, of great munificence. It could have gone but a short way in supporting the magnificence in which he loved to indulge. He was now the most prominent man in Ireland, and for several years the history, not alone of Belfast, but of the entire kingdom, is identified with his name.

The next year (1604) he was chosen Lord Justice of Ireland in the absence of the Lieutenant. He seemed to be unwilling to accept this office, whereupon the King said that, "though the reasons given for his reluctance might evince his modesty, they were no grounds why he should forbear to impose on him to undertake the service laid upon him." To settle this embarrassment, he was appointed Lord Deputy, 15th October, 1604, and commanded to accept the same, though Mountjoy, now Earl of Devonshire, but resident in England, was yet Lieutenant. Seeing the high office to which he was now chosen, it will be readily understood there can be no intention to follow him far beyond the bounds of Belfast, to recount the great events of his career, his proceedings of state and ceremony in Dublin, his various progresses through the kingdom, and his personal and political actions. Such might suitably be introduced from his ownership of Belfast, from being the first and greatest of his name, and from his own special distinction; but brief and occasional notices only must serve the present ends.

The army was reduced. Captain Phillips, in returning thanks to the Lord Deputy that his company was one which stood, informs him that, as directed, he "had caused most part of the

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heather in my behoufe tuchinge a Pattent for the Government of Knockfergus and landes of Belfaste are by the learned Counsell founde defective your lordshipe wyll be pleased to be the meanes that some other to better purpose may be Signed by his maiestie; and albeyt when I have it att best perfection I wyll gladly sell the whole landes for the w<sup>ch</sup> others sell, five poundes in fee simple in these partes of the Kyngdome; yet I must acknowledg my selfe much bound to your lordshipe for procuringe the same for mee."

county to assemble, and interpreted the Proclamation into Irish ;” leading to the inference that Irish was the common language in a country in which it is now entirely unknown. The general poverty is almost incredible, Sir Arthur himself, in reporting the capture of a notorious murderer and confirmed malefactor, saying that, in order to reward such as deserved best in this service, he is “driven to borrow £20 to be distributed among them, there not being so much money in the Treasury nor in the Exchequer.” It is no wonder a firm and cautious hand was required. The Lord Deputy’s private affairs, which more interest us, must also have given him great uneasiness. In a letter to the Earl of Salisbury, June 19th, 1605, after complaining of the want of funds for public and private purposes, he proceeds to say—

“The King’s grants daily increase. There is come hither one Mr. James Hamilton, with two letters from the King. . . . If copies of those letters be called for, the grants will be found to be extraordinary. When he (Chichester) was in England, it pleased the King to bestow on him the Castle of Belfast, and lands adjoining. He has passed it twice, and as yet he understands by this gentleman, who, it seems, has sought all the Records there, some question may be made thereto by reason of some grants made long since to Sir Thomas Smith ; for albeit that deed be of no force, yet not being so found void in the office, as the records of those deeds were not in the kingdom, he (Chichester) is subject to danger. He therefore prays that one letter more may be granted to him for repassing the same.”

Chichester expresses himself mildly and reasonably respecting the supposed flaws in his title, and the confusion possibly consequent on some want of precision in legal or topographical nomenclature. Indeed the disputes, or perhaps, it should be said, the unsettled or varying rights of the O’Neills, would appear to have descended to their successors. Hamilton must have raised or acquired some claim to Belfast, as he was the first to establish fairs and markets at the place so early as February, 1605, and there is very considerable difficulty in disentangling the counter relations, arising from the absence of fixed descriptive particulars in the several grants.

This misunderstanding or difficulty is further brought to light by the fact, that when an arrangement was in progress about the boundaries and divisions of the County of Antrim, and when North Clannaboye was divided into portions, some of which were given to "the O'Neills, and other ancient gentlemen and inhabitants," . . . "but reserving the remainder towards Carrickfergus, not formerly given by his Majesty, to be passed to English and Scottish men by Mr. Hamilton in freehold, reserving a rent," and for this end it is declared they must make use of Mr. Hamilton's grants with his assent. This would argue that the same places had been granted or promised to two different individuals, or at least that Sir Arthur was not settled in the quiet or undisputed possession of his estates in the County of Antrim. He may not have got even his £5 per annum for these two or three years of uncertainty, and took little or no interest as yet in Belfast. But it was not so in his public relations, in which he exhibited great activity and judgment, remarking, with truth, that "he verily believes that the King shall more confirm and strengthen his estate, and leave a more honourable memory behind him, by reforming and civilising Ireland, than in regaining France."

The Earl of Devonshire, the Lord Lieutenant—the Mountjoy of the past—died in 1606, on which occasion, April 25th, Sir Arthur Chichester wrote to the Earl of Salisbury, saying, "he foresees that upon this accident there will be some alteration in the form of this Kingdom's Government, and Salisbury will do him an exceeding favour by reducing him to a private man so it stand with the King's good allowance. He is fitted to do his Majesty service in some meaner office, and in this place his labours are not seen, nor can they bring forth that fruit which is expected. Besides, his fortunes are poor, not having a foot of land or inheritance but such as his Majesty gave him in the North, of which he makes small benefit, and his expenses last year greatly exceeded his income."<sup>1</sup> With characteristic fore-

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<sup>1</sup> He had received, when first appointed Lord Deputy in 1604, £1000 yearly; £500 as a gift for an outfit, and some fees and entertainments attached to his office.



sight, however, he had not forgotten, early in the same year, to interest the Earl of Devonshire in his affairs, by asking him to use his influence "to obtain for him in fee farm certain lands which he now only holds from the King by Lease." He does not mention what or where those lands were, but doubtless some of those in the North of Ireland, which he had acquired, and which he yet held by a tenure not altogether to his satisfaction.<sup>1</sup> But he could not be relieved from the office which, perhaps insincerely, he desired to resign. His talent, and his hoped-for success in great undertakings now meditated, were too favourably looked on in England to justify such a procedure. He was fixed in the appointment, and continued in it for many subsequent years—certainly, at first at least, to the disadvantage of Belfast, inasmuch as his personal superintendence was necessarily withdrawn from this part of the country; and its state, in this period of its transition from the O'Neills to Chichester, could scarcely have been very progressive. The general condition is manifested in observations made by Sir John Davies, Attorney-General of Ireland, after a journey taken by him into Munster, which he describes as beyond comparison better inhabited and cultivated than the Northern province, and containing three ancient and well-built cities, besides many corporate towns, not inferior to the better class of the same in England; "whereas Ulster is a very desert or wilderness, the inhabitants thereof having for the most part no certain habitation in any towns or villages; only upon the east sea coast there are three or four poor towns inhabited—as Knockfergus, Carlingford, the Newrie, and Dundalk. . . . Ulster hath been ever such an outlaw as the King's writ did never run there until within these few years it was cut into several counties by Sir John Perrot; and yet the laws of England were never given in charge to the greatest part of the people, neither did any Judge of Assize ever visit that province before the beginning of his Majesty's reign."

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<sup>1</sup> It is somewhere said, though I cannot now lay my hand on the authority, that Sir Arthur Chichester first held Belfast in *custodiam*. If so, it could have been but temporary.

It is evident that Sir John Davies could not have used the language here quoted if Belfast had been a known place. He may have heard it named by his friend Sir Arthur, as a ruined castle, and a few inconsiderable buildings on which scarcely any value was placed, but it is quite likely that he never saw it, or that the description of it offered any inducement for him to do so. These observations are introduced on the principle that an idea may be formed of a place from the absence of any notice of it, as well as from an imperfect account. Still it would have been beyond calculation satisfactory if Sir John had found his way to Belfast and given a description of it, however brief.

Sir Arthur Chichester, and the others who had got possession of much of the territories of the O'Neills, had been frequently troubled by the claims of the descendants of Sir Thomas Smith, under Queen Elizabeth's grant. In 1607 this claim was renewed, and Smith's visionary pretensions finally settled.<sup>1</sup> Sir Arthur wrote to the Earl of Salisbury, thanking him "for the favour shown to him and others in stopping a suit lately preferred by Sir William Smith, for reviving a title which he pretends to certain lands within the Counties of Down and Antrim, which otherwise would have drawn them to great travail and expense, whereby the country would have remained waste, and he himself would be no way benefited." In those years (1606-7) the *State Papers* are most copious and interesting in their revelations of the important events in which he took part. Frequent mention is made of journeys to the North, but no notice is taken of Belfast, which was too much out of the way to obtain even a passing observation. In one of the usual accounts of the State of Ulster, in which several places and persons are described, Sir Arthur merely says that he himself has Carrickfergus; and that within his government is comprehended the County of Antrim, as well as part of the County of Down; and that in his necessary absence from it Sir Foulke Conway is Lieutenant-Governor in his room. He must, however, like meaner men, have indulged

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<sup>1</sup> For full particulars of the claim raised by Smith in 1607, and its ending, see Appendix No. 2.

in hopes of repose and a peaceful retirement when “in the sere and yellow leaf.” He wrote to the Earl of Salisbury in January, 1607, notifying the death of Mr. Humpstoune, Bishop of Down and Connor, and then says, “I am particularly tied to have a careful regard to the choice of a good and sufficient man for that see, as it hath pleased the King to bestow on me the government of Knockfergus during my life, and as my small portion of land lies within that diocese, whereby I am like to spend the most part of my time there, when discharged from the place I now hold.”<sup>1</sup>

Belfast continues unnoticed. When renewed wars were anticipated, a paper was drawn up containing the “Points for the consideration of the Lords of the Council,” which represents the necessity of fortifying Carrickfergus; “for if the small forts be gotten from us, which they cannot warrant against a foreign enemy, although with small supplies defensible enough against the Irish, there will be no place in Ulster to give opposition but this town.” The small forts, of which it may be supposed Belfast was one, could serve no effectual purpose in a warlike sense. Yet if one of the number, valued so lightly, it had perhaps some favourable features in its character, as at the instance of James Hamilton it was mentioned in 1607 as a place suitable for a Charter of Incorporation, six years before that dignity was conferred upon it. The great event which threw all others into shade—the Flight of the Earls—took place in September, 1607, and hastened the still greater event—the Plantation of the forfeited counties of Ulster. Immediately after the Flight, the surveys and distributing of the estates of the fugitives commenced—“a greater extent of land,” says Sir John Davies, “than any prince in Europe has to dispose of.” Sir Arthur Chichester was acknowledged to be the only man suited to guide this social revolution. He was acquainted, he says in one of his letters, with all parts of

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<sup>1</sup> In recommending Dr. Todd for the appointment of Bishop, he describes him as competent to assist in the Civil Law, and active to go about in the discharge of his ecclesiastical duties “in those remote places.” He also recommends Dromore to be added to Dr. Todd’s expected preferment, as being worth only £20 a year, Down and Connor but £120.

Ulster; in another to the King in 1610, he declares "that he would rather labour with his hands in the Plantation of Ulster than dance or play in that of Virginia." But the copious Calendars already published illustrate at length the proceedings of the Lord Deputy, and further reference to them would be but transgressing limits, which must keep within the little Plantations in and around Belfast. The year before the Flight, Sir Arthur had already leased to "Moyses Hill," for 61 years, a great number of the townlands near Belfast, chiefly in Malone and the Falls, for the rent of £10 a year. A short detail of this lease to Moses Hill, also of those which were given to several others by the Lord Deputy, and the true origin, at the same time, of the modern town of Belfast, are recounted in the ensuing extract from the Report of the Plantation Commissioners.

"A Reporte of the voluntary worke done by Servitors and other gent<sup>e</sup> of qualitie upon landes given them by his Ma<sup>te</sup> or purchased by themselves w<sup>th</sup> in the three counties of Down, Antrim, and Monahan, and buyldings made in Enishowine by such freeholders as Sr Arthur Chichester the nowe Lo: Deputie hath placed there."

Passing over some details foreign to the purpose we reach this narrative:—

"Cominge neerer Knockfergus we came by a stronge forte buylte upon a passadge on the playnes of Moylon w<sup>th</sup> a strong palisade and a drawbridge called Hilsborowe.<sup>1</sup> Within it is a fayre tymber house walled w<sup>th</sup> bricke, and a towre slated. Some other houses are buylte w<sup>th</sup> oute it, wherein are some families of English and Irish settled. This forte was buylte by Moyses Hill, who hath a lease of 61 years of

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<sup>1</sup> This name of "Hilsborowe" has misled many who have seen only a part of this interesting Report, some confounding it with the present well-known town of the name far distant from Belfast, others with Hill Hall. Even Mr. Pinkerton was puzzled by it, and in one part of his notes appears to favour the idea of the latter being the place indicated, though relinquishing it again with the remark that such could not be, as not accordant with other descriptive points. The place was in Malone, and not very far distant from Belfast. It was a castle, or, as the Report further on describes it, "a towre slated," to guard one of the passes over the Lagan, and the site of which is said to be still known. It was near Shaw's Bridge. The Lease of these wide-spreading lands given by the Lord Deputy actually describes the lessee as of "Hillsborowe, County of Antrim." Hill first settled here, and proceeded to make his improvements with great promptness.

the same with a good scope of lande from S<sup>r</sup> Arthur Chichester the nowe deputie.

“W<sup>th</sup> in a myle of Hilsborowe by the River of Lagan where the sea ebbes and flowes in a place called Strandmellis we founde the s<sup>d</sup> Moyses Hill in hand w<sup>th</sup> buyldinge of a stronge house of stone 56 foot longe, and entendes to make it two stories and a halfe high,<sup>1</sup> it being alreadie aboute the height of one storie, and to buylde a good bawne of lyme and stone aboute it w<sup>hch</sup> landes are held by like lease as Hilsborow abovesaid.

“From thence we came to Bealfast where we found many masons, bricklayers, and other laborers aworke who had taken downe the ruynes of the decayed Castle there almoste to the valte of the Sellers, and had likewise layde the foundation of a bricke house 50 foote longe which is to be adjoynd to the sayd Castle by a Stayrecase of bricke w<sup>ch</sup> is to be 14 foot square.

“The house to be made 20 foote wyde, and two Storys and a halfe high. The Castle is to be buylte two Stories above the Sellers, all the Roomes thereof to be valted, and platformes to be made thereupon. The Stayrecase is to be made 10 foote higher than the Castle, about which Castle and House there is a stronge Bawne almost finished which is flankered with foure half Bulwarkes. The foundation of the wall and bullwarkes to the height of the water table is made with stoane, and the reste, being in alle 12 foote high above the ground, is made with bricke. The Bawne is to be compased w<sup>th</sup> a lardge and deep ditche or moate w<sup>ch</sup> will always stande full of water.

“The Castle will defend the Passage over the Foorde at Bealfast between the Upper and Lower Clandeboye, and likewise the Bridge over the Owynvarra between Malon and Bealfast. This work is in so good forwardnes that it is lyke to be finished by the mydle of the next Somer.

“The towne of Bealfast is plotted out in a good forme, wherein are many famelyes of English, Scotch, and some Manksmen already inhabitinge, of which some are artificers who have buylte good tymber houses w<sup>th</sup> chimneys after the fashion of the English palle, and one Inn w<sup>th</sup> very good Lodginge w<sup>ch</sup> is a great comforte to the travellers in those partes.

“Neere w<sup>ch</sup> towne the s<sup>d</sup> S<sup>r</sup> Arthur Chichester hath ready made

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<sup>1</sup> This was the second house built by Hill. It was still nearer Belfast than the preceding, and was the first Strandmillis House. It was doubtless the ruins of this building which existed at Strandmillis almost within memory, and was known by the name of “Sir Moses’ Cellars.”

above twelve hundred thousand of good Bricks, whereof after finishing of the said Castle, house, and Bawne, there will be a good proportion left for the buyldinge of other tenementes within the said Towne.

“Not far from Bealfast the said Sr Arthur Chichester hath impalled a Parke of three myle compasse where he intendeth to buyld a house of lyme and stoane, but a tymber house w<sup>th</sup> chimneyes is already buylte therein, which is compassed about with a rampier of earth and soddes and a deep ditch standing full of water in w<sup>ch</sup> house there now dwelleth one Lieutenant Lowsley with his famelie.

“A little from thence is a large house w<sup>th</sup> chimneys buylt by Humfrey Norton Livetenent of the L<sup>d</sup> Deputies Foote Companie w<sup>ch</sup> house is well intrench<sup>d</sup>, rampiered, and fenced with a strong palisade of tymber, w<sup>ch</sup> house with a good proportion of land the said Norton houldeth by lease from the L<sup>d</sup> Deputie.

“In the way to Knockfergus w<sup>th</sup>in 4 myles of that towne we sawe a pritie stone house w<sup>th</sup> chimneys, two storie high, buylte by Michell Newby ensigne to the L<sup>d</sup> Deputie. It is for the present covered w<sup>th</sup> tacche (thatch) but shal be slated next somer. This is also upon the lande of the Lo. Deputie w<sup>ch</sup> house with 300 acres of lande is lett to the said Newby at a smale rent for many yeares in respect of his service, and buyldinge thereon.

“A myle from the former house but further from the sea as we passed towards Knockfergus, there is upon a hill syde a large house with chimneyes w<sup>ch</sup> is enclosed with a rampier of earth, soddes, and flanker’d, w<sup>ch</sup> was buylte by Thomas Walsh late Cornett of the said Lo. Deputies troop upon his Lop<sup>s</sup> land, and is now inhabited by Lieutenant Barrye who married the saide Walsh his wyddowe, neere which there are many other tenementes inhabited, some of them by such cyvell Irish as doe speake English, and dyvers of them have byne servitors in the late queen’s tyme.

“A myle and somewhat more from Knockfergus we sawe a farme house of the Lo. Deputy buylte of tymber after the English fashion enclosed rounde with a Bawne, ditched aboute, and a strong hedge thereupon, the walls of w<sup>ch</sup> house are latlie made up with stone. There are many inclosiers neere the said house newly made where his Lop hath now a stocke of English cowes, sheep, and other cattell.

“Upon dyvers other portions of the Lo. Deputy’s lands there are many English famelies, some Scottes, and dyvers cyvell Irish planted, and there are three mylles already buylte upon several ptes of the said landes; and tymber and other materialls are also provided for the buyldinge of another mylle neere unto Belfast.”



This Report is signed by Sir Arthur Chichester himself, and by his fellow-labourers in the work of surveying and reporting on the progress of the improvements and plantations; and who were G. Carew, Th. Ridgeway, R. Wingfield, and Ol. Lambert. It is not dated, but was about 1611, which may thus be considered as the time of the formal inauguration or the beginning of the town of Belfast on a fixed plan. The houses already in it were, it is to be supposed, squalid and irregularly placed, and an entire change of system immediately took effect under energetic auspices. An inn too was built, the first in the town. The Commissioners proceeded on their onward journey, describing the other places which came under their observation.<sup>1</sup>

This Report is in some measure topographical, but as it exhibits something of the personal character of Sir Arthur Chichester, presenting him to us as an agriculturist, and an introducer of English cattle into the country at so early a date as 1611, or sooner; as it proves his liberal dealings with others, and, above all, as it comprises the record of the real beginning of Belfast as a town, its insertion here is not misplaced. The Lord Deputy must have been sometimes present in the infant town to superintend the progress of the rebuilding of the Castle, and, generally, of the works which he had originated. He distributed, it is to be hoped, with an impartial hand, the balance of the twelve hundred thousand bricks which he had made. He must also have personally known most of the persons who had been induced to settle in it. Very many of the number were of English birth. It may be said indeed that nearly all the first inhabitants of Belfast were of that country, but the wars of the century made the Scottish element predominant long before its close.

Sir Arthur was created Baron of Belfast in 1612, and on the 27th April, 1613, the town was constituted a Corporation by

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<sup>1</sup> This paper is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, though small portions of it have already appeared in print. The reference to it is *Lambeth Library*, cod. 630, fol. 144. For some further very short extracts from this Report, see Appendix No. 3.

Charter, to consist of a Sovereign or Chief Magistrate, Twelve Burgesses, and Commonalty.

“The Sovereign was to be chosen on the Feast of the Nativity of St. John Baptist, and to be sworn the 29th September, before Arthur, Lord Chichester of Belfast, his heirs or assigns, being Lords of the Castle, or in his or their absence before the Constable of the said Castle for the time being; the Lord and Constable both to be free Burgesses in right of office; and two Members of Parliament to be chosen by the Sovereign and Burgesses. The Sovereign was to be selected by Lord Chichester, out of three discreet and sufficient Burgesses, whose names were presented to him by the Corporate body then acting; and in default of such nomination the Sovereign and Burgesses were to make their own free choice, and the same rule to be observed in case of a vacancy within the year by death or removal, the Election in such event to be made within Fifteen days, and that of a Burgess upon vacancy to be made within Seven Days. The Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commons were empowered to make Bye-Laws with the advice and consent of the said Arthur, Lord Chichester, his heirs and assigns. No inhabitant was to plead or be impleaded out of the said Borough in any suit relative to any property or demand within the same, without the special License of the said Lord of the Castle of Belfast (matters relating to the Crown, to the right or interest of the Sovereign or Burgesses in their *politick* capacity, or the Sovereign in his own Right excepted). A Court of Record was to be held every Thursday, for the trial of all suits, &c., not exceeding the sum of £20 Irish. No person was to be permitted to sell or expose for Sale any goods by Retail within the space of Three miles in a direct line from any part of the Town, except such as shall be there planted, or placed, by Arthur, Lord Chichester, his heirs or assigns, being Lords of the Castle, or be resident in, or inhabitants of the said Borough, under the forfeiture of the said goods. The Sovereign was to be a Justice or Keeper of the Peace within the Borough and Liberties. There was to be a Guild Mercatory and a Common Seal; two Sergeants at Mace and other inferior officers were to be appointed, to continue during their own good behaviour, or the pleasure of the Corporate Body, and the Sovereign was to be Clerk of the Markets. The freemen and their successors were to choose and establish a wharf or quay within the Franchises in any convenient place upon the Bay or Creek of Belfast, and all merchants and other liege subjects were there to load and unload, to import and export their goods, paying the usual customs and duty.”

This abstract of the Charter of Belfast, and from the operation of which was excepted "the Castle, together with the curtilages, gardens, orchards, and edifices whatsoever to the said Castle belonging," may seem valueless, as the Old Corporation has been long extinct; but it should be worth recapitulating if only as an official or legal memorial of the corporate birth of Belfast, of the ample powers retained by Lord Chichester in its government, of the privileges extended to the inhabitants who were gathering within its scanty bounds, and, besides, should be understood in relation to the subsequent events of the history of the town.

The boundaries described in the Charter are rather indefinite, and continued so till the last, or till the extinction, it may be said, of the Old Corporation. "A kind of water boundary was generally assumed as marking the limits. The River Lagan was taken as the Eastern boundary; the Blackstaff to some extent on the South, and the Mile Water to some extent on the North, are stated to be boundaries." <sup>1</sup>

Under the powers thus accorded, John Vesey was appointed the first Sovereign of Belfast, and twelve Burgesses were chosen to assist him in managing the affairs of the New Corporation.<sup>2</sup> Several of them were the personal friends of Lord Chichester; others were of some position, or, from sufficient cause, favoured by him. Some of the former class had received grants of land from him; they were military men—perhaps thought of turning their swords into ploughshares—and could not have interested themselves much in civic affairs. Grants were made in the town to inhabitants, at nominal or inconsiderable rents, to encourage settlement and building, and a portion of land was always attached to each. These were the original Burgage Shares, by which name they were afterwards known at sales, in comparatively late times, or when being divided into smaller proportions.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in Ireland. (1833–1834.)

<sup>2</sup> For the names of the first Twelve Burgesses, and some observations respecting a few of them, see Appendix No. 4.

This town of Belfast was not incorporated in 1613 by reason of any size or importance which it had attained, but entirely for political or state purposes. Great measures were in progress, for the effectual settlement of which it was necessary to obtain parliamentary sanction; and about forty boroughs were created, some of them rather irregularly, and all of places entirely obscure and unimportant. Belfast was not the most insignificant of the number, although it was one of eleven small boroughs, to which the return of members was at first objected. The members were "to forbear to sit in the house, being falsely returned, unless they should be again duly elected." This, it may be supposed, was done, though the cause of their temporary exclusion is not stated; and accordingly Sir John Blennerhasset, and George Trevillian, Esq., were returned as the two first Members of Parliament for the Borough of Belfast.<sup>1</sup>

The town being thus elevated to the rank of a corporation with parliamentary representatives, regulations were immediately made for its own domestic benefit and progress, and to assist the settlers and infuse a trading spirit among the small community.

Lord Chichester died on the 19th February, 1625 (according

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<sup>1</sup> This was the first Parliament which had been held in Ireland for 27 years. Those who do not desire to obtain very full information regarding its stormy beginnings and general proceedings from more elaborate works, will get popular accounts of both from two writers who regard them from different points of view, viz., Leland's *History of Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 438, and *The Flight of the Earls*, by the Rev. C. P. Meehan, p. 394; also, at more length, in *Desiderata Curiosa Hibernica*, vol. i., p. 155; where the mutual recriminations and charges between Lord Chichester and the recusants, as they were called, respecting the choosing of this Parliament and the entire civil government of Ireland, are brought before King James.

Sir John Blennerhasset had no connection with Belfast, or any knowledge of it; he is first called Hasset. In 1609 (*S.P.*, 1608-1610, p. 257) the King directs — Hasset, Esq., to be appointed a Baron of the Exchequer. In 1621 he is appointed Chief Baron, and is called Sir John Blennerhasset.

Sir Arthur Chichester had four brothers and eight sisters (*Lodge, Archdall's Continuation*, vol. i., p. 316), and his connections were therefore numerous. His sister Urith was married to John Trevillian, Esq., in 1591, and this George, one of the first two members for Belfast, was their son. Captain Trevillian received a grant of 1000 acres of land in Wexford, and had also the command of a small fleet of boats on Lough Neagh.

to modern reckoning), and was buried in Carrickfergus,<sup>1</sup> where a stately monument to his memory, recording his career and services, still exists. It is the obituary of a very eminent person, who may be said without exaggeration to have founded Belfast, and of which a descendant has been ever since, and is still, under altered modern relations, the proprietor. He wrote a few years before his death, addressed to King James, a record of his labours, and his opinions about Ireland.<sup>2</sup> There is nothing local in it, and it is unfortunate that nowhere did he commit to paper any specific observations, like the Earl of Essex in Queen Elizabeth's time, of the natural advantages of Belfast, of its appearance or progress in his day, or anything particular which he had done, or caused to be done, to foster its early growth. That he left some records which would have been illustrative of these points may be inferred from an observation in the Account of the County of Antrim in 1683, by Richard Dobbs, who says "he had heard the Earl of Donegall say, that he had then by him several weekly accounts of old Sir Arthur's charge in house-keeping." House-keeping and house-building are sometimes near akin, and if documents so described had been fortunately preserved till this time, more would have been known about the

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<sup>1</sup> The present Marquis of Donegall has abandoned the crypt in St. Nicholas Church in Carrickfergus as his place of family sepulture, and for that purpose has built a mausoleum near the new Castle of Belfast, at the Cave Hill. It has already received the remains of the late Marquis, who died in 1844; but the intention of removing thereto the coffins of all the Chichesters, and some of their connections, from the vault at Carrickfergus, if ever entertained, has not been carried out.

The Chichesters were not all interred at Carrickfergus. Of John Chichester, the second son of Lord Edward, and next brother to Arthur, first Earl of Donegall, this note is in Lodge's *Peerage* (vol. i., p. 330). "He died in 1647, as appears by the probate of his will in London, 4th February, 1647-8, and in Dublin in July, 1657; and is so confirmed by his Lady's will (proved 8th November, 1673), wherein she desires, that if she died in the North, to be buried privately by her deceased husband, Mr John Chichester, at Belfast." This must have been at the old church in High Street, and yet this John Chichester, interred in so obscure a grave, was not only brother of the first Earl of Donegall, but father of the second.

<sup>2</sup> For the Will of the Lord Deputy, his likeness, genealogy from himself, and some other particulars, see Appendix No. 5.

rise of Belfast, and of the personal history of the Lord Deputy, than can be obtained from his public actions.

The Lord Deputy lost his only son when an infant, and was succeeded by his brother Edward, in whose favour the title was revived, with the augmentation of Viscount Chichester of Carrickfergus. There is not much known of the character of Lord Edward Chichester. He partook but little of the ability of his predecessor, though also in the army, and holding many important offices. Much of his life was passed in more peaceful times, but still in a country by no means satisfied or at rest. In a "Discourse concerning the settlement of the natives of Ulster," written about 1630, and to be found in the *Carte Papers*, it is declared "that in its general appearance it is as yet no other but a very wilderness. The habitation of the new planters in all the province is scarce visible. For the Irish, of whom many townships might be made, do not now dwell together in any ordinary form, but wander with their cattle all the summer in the mountains, and all the winter in the woods." This picture could not represent the neighbourhood of Belfast, of which Brereton, an observant traveller, whose words have been often quoted, speaks about the same time in very different language, saying, of those occupying the lands near this town granted by the Lord Deputy to Hill—

"Near hereunto Mr. Arthur Hill, son and heir to Sir Moses Hill, hath a brave plantation which he holds by lease, which still is for thirty years to come; the land is my Lord Chichester's, and the lease was made for sixty years to Sir Moyses Hill, by the old Lord Chichester. This plantation, it is said, doth yield him a £1000 per annum. Many Lancashire and Cheshire men are here planted; with some of them I conversed. They sit upon a rack rent, and pay 5s or 6s an acre for good ploughing land, which is now clothed with excellent corn."<sup>1</sup>

It is curious that this person, afterwards a general in the

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<sup>1</sup> *Brereton's Journal*, or Book, has been published by the Chetham Society, and is described and largely quoted from by the Rev. Dr. Hume, in one of his interesting contributions to the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. i., p. 247.



service of the Parliament, and a trustworthy and painstaking writer, while he describes Joymount, Carrickfergus, and Malone, entirely overlooks the town of Belfast, confining his few observations to the Castle only. This is somewhat inexplicable, and it is rather mortifying to presume that its small or unattractive appearance in 1634 should have been the sole cause of the omission. At the same time it is quite possible that such is the fact, as from another quarter there is evidence of the inconsiderable advance it had yet made in wealth or population. In the marriage articles of 28th December, 1630, made on the union of Arthur Chichester, Esq., son and heir of Edward, Lord Viscount Chichester, with Lady Mary Digby, eldest daughter of John, Earl of Bristol, the following appears in the *Schedule of Estates* put in settlement—"The Manor and Burrough of Belfast, per annum £400."<sup>1</sup> This was a large increase from the £5 which the Lord Deputy considered to be his interest in the town and lands of Belfast, when first bestowed on him; but still it is not a little remarkable that the income of the Chichester family, even in 1630, should have been so small from a source afterwards so abundant.

While Lord Edward Chichester was owner of Belfast, and the estates thereunto attached, final confirmation of the original grant of them was made in 1640, on the plea for remedying defective titles. For this favour, or order of composition as it was called, Lord Chichester had to pay £467 17s. 6d. to meet the exigencies of the State.<sup>2</sup> This was in the days when these exigencies were great, and high-handed measures adopted to supply them; and Lord Chichester and his advisers were, there is little doubt, quite satisfied to pay this fine for an indisputable title.<sup>3</sup>

The two members of Parliament for Belfast at this period

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of this paper was given to me by James Torrens, Esq.

<sup>2</sup> Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. i., p. 329.

<sup>3</sup> Those who acted for Lord Chichester in this case were Sir William Wrey and Henry Le Squire. They compounded with the Lord Deputy and the Commissioners for Remedying Defective Titles for the above-named sum, and received a new grant from Charles the First. Arthur Hill was united with them

(1639) were Sir William Wrey, of Trebitch, in Cornwall, son-in-law of the Lord Chichester, and George Rawdon, Esq. The latter was founder of the Moira family in County Down, and was much distinguished in after years in the Irish wars, and in the more important matters connected with the improvement and good government of the country. Parliamentary duties soon came to be in abeyance in Ireland, and these members for Belfast had little opportunity of making themselves known in that branch of the public service. One of the great political events of this period, which took place almost at our very doors, and on which the attention of the whole three kingdoms was drawn, was the assembling of the large army at Carrickfergus, by the influence of Strafford, the Lord Deputy. This army consisted of about 9000 men, "8000 of which number were Irish Catholics," and "Sir<sup>1</sup> William St. Leger, Sergeant-Major-General of the army, having reviewed these troops at Carrickfergus, saw such willingness and aptness in them to learn their exercises, and that mettle and gallant appearance which would recommend them to be chosen for service where a crown lay at stake, made no scruple to pronounce, that considering how newly they had been raised, no Prince in the Christian world had, for their number, a better or more orderly body of men in his service." Whether deserving of this high eulogium, no proof was afforded them, as they were disbanded in September, 1640. Belfast was within the influence of this great political and military movement, but nothing is known of its immediate or direct results upon the town.

The great Civil War was now impending. Belfast occupied a more prominent position during its continuance, than its importance or size would seem to have warranted. Personages of historic distinction appeared within its little streets, and events of great moment were about to happen within it and around it.

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in the agreement, and also received confirmation of the valuable lease he held for the remaining years it had to run.

Sundry confirmations of the Chichester estates are afterwards referred to, down even to the year 1668, but they could have been only precautionary.

<sup>1</sup> Curry's *Civil Wars*, vol. i., p. 166. ; Carte's *Ormond*, vol. i., fol. 105.

## CHAPTER VI.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

THE insurrection of 1641 can scarcely be said to have been unexpected. The Irish believed themselves to be wronged. Their lands to much extent were in possession of aliens; many of their chiefs were in exile or fighting in foreign armies; and themselves, though there had been comparative peace for nearly forty years, alarmed with the apprehension of fresh persecutions. The spark, however, which lighted the flame was the situation of Scotland, and the success of the inhabitants of that nation in resisting the attempts of the King and his supporters to force measures upon them which were repugnant to their convictions. The times were disordered, and the presumed opportunity of regaining their lands and station, so longed for by a large portion of the Irish people, had at last, they thought, arrived.<sup>1</sup> Different objects, which evolved themselves in the progress of the impending struggle, actuated the leaders: some were moderate; others had designs extreme and unattainable. Old Irish, Anglo-Irish, Puritans and Presbyterians, the several Parliaments which then made laws for the three nations, and the King himself, entered upon a civil war, which continued for ten years, and left results of the most important and enduring character. The alleged cruelties by which the Great Rebellion was distinguished, the reputation of many of the commanders, their ever-changing

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<sup>1</sup> This is the popular and general account given of the motives and causes of the civil wars, or Great Rebellion, of the seventeenth century. The deeper questions are not so well understood, such as the influence of Lord Strafford's project to remove all the Scotch out of Ireland, where they had long been settled. It was a most impracticable scheme, and would have led to endless strife. The leaders on each side were probably not unaware of the design, of far greater weight, of using the Irish army to subdue England. See also, for the causes of the Irish Rebellion, popularly stated, *Castlehaven's Memoirs*, pp. 8-18.

interests, and all the memorable incidents of the period, have been canvassed from the time of their occurrence to the present day with an asperity which is even yet not subdued. Local narrative is not required to enter upon general disputed topics, but, by relating the events of a particular place, may so far let in side lights to assist in illustrating the deeds in progress on the greater stage of a nation's history.

The rebellion began in a part of the country not very distant from Belfast, and was confined to Ulster for several weeks before it reached the other provinces. The King was in Scotland, and the first intelligence which is supposed to have reached him respecting the outbreak was from this town, and in this letter, written to him by Lord Edward Chichester, the owner of Belfast.

“MOST GRACIOUS SOVERAIGNE.

“May it please your Majesty. I have had advertizement from some credible persons that certain Septe of the Irish of good quallities in the northern parts of your Majesty's Kingdom of Ireland two nights last past did rise with force, and have taken Charlemont, Dungannon, and Tanragee, and the Newry, with your Majesty's Stores there, Towns all of good consequence, the furthest within 40 miles of this place, and have slain only one man, and that they are advancing near into these parts, and that this last night of all there hath been seen great fires so near as were discerned from this place, and that your Maties ill affected subjects of that nation do resort to them and add much to their number. What the intent is cannot at present be considered, but those Septes are all of the Romish religion. I have for the present given Advertizement thereof throughout these parts, that your Maties good subjects may put themselves into a way for defence and preservation of the country, until further course may be taken to suppress them. I have likewise commanded your Maties forces in these parts to be in readiness in their several garrisons to defend the place and suppress the outrages if any shall be there attempted, and have layed the best guard that for the present can be gotten to preserve your Maties Stores at Carrigfergus, and shall be otherwise as watchful and diligent as I may to contribute my best assistance to the suppression of these tumults. This is all that at present is done, and all the certain relation I am able to give your Matie. thereof. Notwithstanding I have humbly thought it my duty to represent these things to your

gracious Matie that in your great wisdom some course may be taken in time to curb these insolencies which otherwise may grow to a greater head. This bearer Mr. Sheeles, a Scotchman, and one whom we conceive a loyal and true subject of your Matie will give your Matie more particular relation of the passages. I beseech your Maties pardon if any thing I have herein transgressed, these proceeding from the loyal heart and affections of him that ever prays for your Maties long and prosperous reign over us in much tranquillity and happiness.

“Your Majesty’s  
Most Faithful Subject & Servant,  
“EDWARD CHICHESTER.

“BELFAST, 24th October, 1641.”

There is no question as to the great alarm which the rebellion occasioned in Belfast. A witness describes the effects produced, and the measures taken for the safety of this town, and unfolds in a manner so graphic its unprepared condition, that the strictly local parts of the narrative are of absorbing interest. They are in a tract written by Captain Lawson, and published in 1643, in which he, the chief actor in the proceedings, informs us that he had occasion “about the 16th of October, 1641, before any notice of an insurrection, to take a journey from Londonderry to Dublin, and to travel by way of Belfast, to the Iron Works within two miles thereof.” He took his journey from thence to go to Dublin on the 21st October following—“but hearing at Newry of the rebellion, I returned” he says, “to Killileagh, and came in the night by Comber, through the Lord of Ardes’s country, about by Little Belfast, and came to Great Belfast, and up to the Iron Works near thereunto. . . . But having rested, I arose, calling two horsemen with me, and in the morning, being Monday, went down back again to Great Belfast, where I found most part of the inhabitants fled and flying, and carrying away their goods to Carrickfergus, and the old Lord Chichester shipped aboard in a ship. So I went throughout the town, and blamed them for offering to leave the town, and intreated for some arms, either by buying or lending, but could not prevail. At last I found in Master Le Squire’s house seven muskets and

eight halberts, ready in the street to be shipped to Carrickfergus, which arms I took, and bought a drum, and beating the same through the town, raised about twenty men, who came with me again up to the Iron Works,<sup>1</sup> having Mr. Forbus, and some number with me, where also I gathered in all about 160 horse and foot."

So important was this action of Lawson considered to be, that one of the Irish leaders (O'Cahan) wrote of it—"If Captain Lawson had not opposed our cousin Sir Conn Magennis of entering Lisnegarvie, when Lord Conway, his troop of horse, and all the townspeople left it, we would have had Belfast and all those parts in possession." This may be exaggerated, but if true the discomfiture at Lisburn affected the safety of Belfast in 1641.

Many tracts similar to that of Captain Lawson were soon abroad with regard to the early events of the rebellion in other places. The O'Neills and others were again in force as in former days, followed by a great multitude, to contend, as they declared, for King and country. This was considered to be an empty protestation in face of their actions. Defence was necessary. Colonel Chichester<sup>2</sup> and Sir Arthur Tyringham were ap-

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<sup>1</sup> This is quite a picturesque story, and very great credit is due to Lawson for the spirit which he displayed on the apprehension of the dreaded inroad of the Irish into Belfast. The people of the town were rather pusillanimous, if the narrative be quite authentic, of which there is no reasonable doubt. Extracts from it will be found at length in the *Historical Collections relative to Belfast*, p. 16, which relate Captain Lawson's subsequent proceedings in Lisburn. The frequent allusions to the Iron Works will be explained in the chapter on Early Trade and Manufactures. Lawson had pecuniary interest in the works, which caused him to be sensitive about their preservation.

The expressions, Great Belfast and Little Belfast, are curious, and occur in no other document, so far as known. The former, of course, means the town as it then was, the latter an appendage thereto, apparently from this narrative on the County Down side of the river, or else a cluster of houses at the Iron Works on the Lagan, though it is far from being in this instance a clear story.

<sup>2</sup> Colonel Chichester was Arthur, eldest son and heir of Lord Edward Chichester; he was nephew therefore to the Lord Deputy, and was afterwards first Earl of Donegall. He adopted throughout the war the policy of the Duke of Ormond, was associated with him in his measures, and his character and conduct were always deserving of approbation.

Sir Arthur Tyringham had been governor of Newry, escaped from that town



pointed governors of the County of Antrim, and to the command of the forces therein; and this town served as a refuge for the people of the surrounding country, so far as its size and defenceless condition permitted. The inhabitants and soldiers proceeded early in 1642 to surround it with a rampart and wet ditch, which were afterwards improved and strengthened,<sup>1</sup> and Belfast during the rebellion enjoyed immunity from any direct Irish aggression.

The rebellion extended itself through other parts of the kingdom; and at last assistance was obtained from Scotland to subdue it. In April, 1642, 2500 men, the first instalment of a stipulated army of 10,000, arrived in Carrickfergus for that purpose, under the command of General Robert Monro. Part of this force was quartered in Malone, quite close to Belfast. The Scotch were joined by the English here, and a power thus arose to cope with the insurgents, if that object had been pursued at once with vigour and determination. But Monro, after a time, became inactive, influenced, it has been supposed, by secret instructions to protract the war. Amicable relations at the first subsisted between the Scottish commander and Chichester, Conway, Montgomery, Rawdon, and other Protestant, or, as they are frequently styled, English officers—as both were deemed to have the same desire in view, the speedy suppression of the rebellion. Details of many military transactions at a distance, in which they jointly took part, are accessible to every reader. Besides these, there are also in manuscript, or in rare tracts, narratives of specific incidents directed to particular localities—the produc-

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when taken by the rebels, and, as above stated, had, with Colonel Chichester, joint command in Belfast. The nearest place outside of Belfast where particulars of the effects of the rebellion are described will perhaps be found mentioned in the *Rawdon Papers*, pp. 88–92, from Mr. Totesbury, who lived somewhere between Lisburn and Antrim. It shows an advance in property and material comforts one would hardly have expected in 1641, and the narrative of Mr. Totesbury's spoliation is fully told.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Froude, in his account of the capture of Sir Brian O'Neill, with all its disastrous accompaniments, in Belfast in 1574, mentions "the walls of the town." This is an error, but not one affecting the author's comments. Belfast was never walled, and the matter is but referred to here to state that fact.

tions of unknown writers who participated in the events which they relate.<sup>1</sup> The incursions which were made by the united forces to places far from Belfast were generally successful; the Irish were so much disheartened that the chiefs had some intention of abandoning the country, as their predecessors had done many years before; but the apparent unwillingness on the part of Monro to bring the war to a close, the divergent feelings which began to exhibit themselves between the English and Scotch, the arrival to their assistance of the great soldier Owen Roe O'Neill, revived their hopes and produced a continuance of the contest. The Earl of Leven came over in August, 1642, with the remainder of the Scottish army; his commission to be general-in-chief over all the Ulster forces was distasteful to the English officers, and operated still farther in weakening that cordial union necessary to success. Belfast continued in full possession of the English, with a portion of Scotch troops intermingled, and the putting of the place in the best posture of defence to meet contingencies was fully carried out. The Scotch in the North of Ireland formed almost a distinct power; and even they were not supported from England, where greater events than the Irish rebellion were in course of performance. They came to be neglected by their employers, and began to experience wants, to supply which they had to plunder and fight, sometimes with indifferent success.

With such causes of disturbance the country was becoming rapidly disorganised. The King earnestly wished for peace, that he might obtain men and money from Ireland to oppose his enemies in England, but a crisis had now been reached sufficient to render solid peace a work of time and extreme difficulty, so that, preliminary to it, a truce or Cessation of arms for a year, one of the most marked events in the history of the Civil Wars, was adjusted. When this measure became known, the English Parliament issued a proclamation against it, and the Scotch in the north of Ireland would not recognise it; neither of these

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<sup>1</sup> One of these, from the *Pinkerton MSS.*, is inserted as an example in Appendix No. 6.

would make even a truce with the Irish Catholics. Some of the more moderate in that connection were the chief promoters of the Cessation. One of the two Lords Justices was removed from his office; he and some of his confederates, the partisans of the English Parliament, were accused of high crimes and thrown into prison, and a momentary prospect appeared of a settled pacification.

This famed armistice did not answer its intended purpose, for even between the English royalists and the Irish commanders, both of whom concurred in it, no unanimity followed from it, but disputes arose, which letters written by Colonel Chichester, of Belfast, and those who were expected to act in harmony with him in the King's interest, will abundantly exhibit. The Cessation was to take effect from the 15th September, 1643.

It is necessary that the relations between the several parties should be understood to make comprehensible the event which was at hand—the capture of this town by Monro—one of the incidents which our annals contain, quite of general historical character, both in its inception and its results.

The terms on which the English and Irish stood towards each other were unfriendly—a state, though under the sanction of a Cessation,<sup>1</sup> neither of peace or war; and it is to be considered now what the relation of the former was to Monro and the Scottish army, their other allies in this town and neighbourhood. While the Cessation was in force, General Monro, in the early part of 1644, received a commission from the Parliament to be commander-in-chief both of the English and Scotch forces in Ulster.

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<sup>1</sup> Letters which refer to the Cessation are in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, labelled Lib. Dub. Coll., F, 3. 11. They appeared too lengthened to incorporate with the history, having no particular connection with the town; but as Colonel Chichester, of Belfast, was actor and author on one side, and well-known Irish characters of the wars of 1641 were his correspondents; and as they exhibit more at large than any condensed statement could do the nature and effects of the famous Cessation which agitated the whole three kingdoms, their introduction in an Appendix, No. 7, must be deemed judicious. There are two other longer papers on the subject, containing accounts of the quantity and value of the corn alleged to have been taken by the Irish from the English. They are equally curious and original, but the letters will serve the present purpose.

This appointment was entirely contrary to the wishes of the English officers, more particularly as directions had been issued, almost simultaneously with it, that all should receive the Covenant. The Presbyterians very generally acceded to this requirement; but the commanders of the English troops—the undoubted royalists—declined to accept it. Carte says of the general position at this juncture, that “there was scarce an officer in Ulster but who had submitted to the Covenant, except Sir James Montgomery, Sir Robert Stewart, and his major, Galbraith, of the old Scots, and those of the three English regiments. These last were in a very distressed condition, and Colonel Chichester having represented it to the Lord Lieutenant desired his assistance. Ormond raised £300 upon his private credit, and sent it for a present relief to the garrison of Belfast, to be employed for the security of that important place against the Covenanters.” This sum could not much avail. The officers who refused the Covenant, and who were irritated besides with Monro, were placed in a great difficulty by these measures, to which he, as supreme in command, required them to submit. They agreed to meet at Belfast on 13th May, 1644, to consult what steps they should take in this emergency. These parties were not at this time really hostile; they were but “un-friends;” both were ostensibly engaged in the same cause. The first capture of Belfast during the civil wars by a friendly foe, if such expression properly describes the relative position of the Scotch and English, soon after followed. The meeting and its consequences will be related chiefly in the words of another,<sup>1</sup> and are rather well known, but their true bearing not generally understood. In this town, therefore, the officers assembled, the principal of whom were Sir James Montgomery, Lord Blayney, Colonel Hill, Major Rawdon, Sir Theophilus Jones, Major Gore, and Colonel Chichester, who was commander in Belfast. They met in the evening, but adjourn-

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<sup>1</sup> Carte, in his *Life of the Duke of Ormond*, vol. i., p. 493, where the capture of Belfast by Monro in 1644 is related at full length. It is likewise in the *Carte Papers*, recently examined, the language in both being the same.

ing till the next morning had gone to their lodgings, when a soldier of Colonel Chichester's regiment coming from Carrickfergus brought intelligence that General Monro had directed the garrison of that place—Colonel Hume's and other Scotch regiments—to be ready to march at two o'clock next morning towards Belfast. "The guards thereupon were strengthened, and every officer, as well those of the field as others, ordered upon duty. Some horse were sent as scouts to make discoveries, who, returning at six in the morning, affirmed that they had been within three miles of Carrickfergus, and that the whole country was clear. . . . About an hour after, Monro was descried within half-a-mile of the town advancing with great speed towards one of the gates, which, before the drums could beat and the garrison be drawn together to make opposition, was opened to him by a sergeant of Captain MacAdam's and the soldiers of the guard, so that he marched orderly through the place till he came to the opposite or south gate leading to Lisnegarvey, and then directed his men to possess themselves of the caannon, bulwarks, and guards."

This stratagem and unexpected seizure of Belfast by the Scotch took the Government by surprise, and induced very extensive correspondence. Ormond noticed it immediately in a letter to England, saying—"We are here threatened with an invasion of the Scots out of the North, who have treacherously surprised Belfast and attempted other English garrisons;"<sup>1</sup> and the Parliament, perhaps thinking the measure too precipitate, called for an explanation from the Scotch Estates. They returned Monro's account of his reasons and motives for acting as he had done, in which he says—

"That Colonel Chichester, contrary to the declaration of both Houses 1st November, 1643, did agree to the Cessation made with the Irish.

"That upon his agreement to the Cessation £3000 Sterling was

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<sup>1</sup> The *Carte Papers*, quoted in Curry's *Civil Wars of Ireland*, vol. i., p. 321. It was Monro's attempt to get possession of Lisburn to which Ormond here alludes.

promised to him out of the Cessation money, whereof he received £500 Sterling.<sup>1</sup>

“That he kept constant correspondence with the Lord of Ormond by Letters and other ways, after the Cessation.

“That he conveyed Adjutant Stuart, and Colonel Leyton then come from the King's army in England, from Belfast to Dublin, there to negotiate with the rebels.

“That upon orders from the Lord of Ormond he caused proclaim all those that joined with the Covenant, traitors and rebels; and administered an oath to his regiment and the inhabitants<sup>2</sup> for opposing the Covenant.

“That he cashiered all such as had taken the Covenant, or refused to take the oath against it.

“That from the time of the first landing of the Scottish army in Ireland there was always a part of the Scottish forces quartered in Belfast until the 17th of March 164—,<sup>3</sup> that Col. Cambel's regiment went into Scotland. And the said town was only a place of quarters and not fortified, till, after the removal of the Scottish forces Col. Chichester brought his regiment and troops which were quartered in the country into the town, and by order from the Earl of Ormond fortified the same, planted cannon on the works, and did begin to cut off the highway that enters Carrickfergus port,<sup>4</sup> whereupon Gen. Major Monro being advertised on the 12th May 1644 that the Earl of Ormond and Council in Dublin had resolved to convey 1500 men into Belfast for the further strengthening of that garrison, did upon the 14th of May in the morning surprise the forces under the command of Colonel Chichester and possessed himself of the town of Belfast before they could be in readiness to make opposition; whereupon the said Colonel Chichester went to Dublin, and his forces to the Rebels; and the Lord of Ormond and Council then finding themselves disappointed in their designs wrote a Letter to Major General Monro within

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<sup>1</sup> This alludes to £30,800 raised here by the Irish for the King's necessities, called here the Cessation money.

<sup>2</sup> “Of Belfast” should be here understood. It may also be observed, when the word Covenant is introduced, as it is here, that there were two Covenants: the first that of 1638, called the National Covenant, adopted in Scotland; the second the Solemn League and Covenant taken in 1643. It is the latter which expresses the determination to extirpate Popery, Prelacy, and Heresy, and which now agitated the country, as a symbol of partisanship.

<sup>3</sup> The last figure is wanting in the original.

<sup>4</sup> The meaning here is not apparent.



three days after the town was taken, requiring him to restore to Col. Chichester the said town of Belfast with all the ordnance, arms, ammunition, &c., as may appear by the said letter herewith presented. Now forasmuch as the said Col. Chichester and his Regiment had agreed to the Cessation and joined with the Rebels in their councils and actions, and so continues in avowed opposition and open rebellion against the Parliament of England for the space of six months after the declaration of the Honble. Houses, the Commander in Chief of the Scottish army was obliged by his commission and instructions to endeavour the reducing of that garrison, and having recovered the same out of the hands of the rebels the said Town or garrison of Belfast ought to be at the disposal of the Commanders thereof, during their abode for that service in those parts, where such towns and places are according to the 10th article of the treaty between the Kingdoms of 6th August, 1642, especially since it is so necessary for quartering of the Scottish forces there who otherwise are not able to subsist, no care being taken for their entertainment. And as the said garrison since it was in the power of the Scottish army hath always been patient to any authority from the Honble. Houses for magazine and other uses, so shall it be for the future on all occasions.”<sup>1</sup>

There is much both untrue and disingenuous in this statement of Monro, and it must have so appeared to the Commissioners of the Parliament from their Report which here follows. The symptoms of distrust between them and the Scotch are from it sufficiently obvious. They say—

“That there never was any oath administered by Colonel Chichester either to his Regiment or the inhabitants of Belfast for opposing the Covenant; and though divers of his regiment had formerly taken the Covenant, he never cashiered any of them for so doing, nor was any

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<sup>1</sup> Monro's account of the taking of Belfast is in Dr. Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, vol. i., p. 538, Appendix; but of course without the more important supplementary matter supplied here in continuation of it. The foundations of Dr. Reid's account are *Bibl. Jurid. Edin. MSS.*, Jac. 5. 2. Wod. 65, fol. No. 103. Monro heading his apology “The *Surrender of Belfast*” was rather audacious. In no sense could it have been termed a *surrender* of the town. That this was the public opinion may be inferred from the circumstance of Colonel Matthews, the commandant at Newry, refusing a passage to Monro through that town, saying they were resolved to lose their lives “rather than run the hazard of such an affront as had been given lately at Belfast.”—Carte's *Life of the Duke of Ormond*, vol. i., p. 496.

oath against it proposed, neither did any quit his Regiment upon the publication of the Proclamation issued by the Earl of Ormond against the Covenant, save one Lieut. MacAdam, who took occasion thereupon to repair into Scotland, though he was earnestly desired by Col. Chichester to stay and was promised a Company for so doing."

They then continue—

"And though we take not upon us to excuse or extenuate any of the miscarriages of Colonel Chichester, yet as anything is suggested to fortify the reason of detaining Belfast (so properly and entirely belonging to the disposal of the Parliament of England),<sup>1</sup> we conceive it our parts to endeavour the rectifying of any mistake in that kind, and rest assured that whatever consequence is drawn from the reports of Colonel Chichester agreeing to the Cessation with the Irish rebels contrary to the Declaration of the Parliament of England is so fully known to be ill grounded, that nothing is more manifest than that his Regiment was one of those that were before Charlemont when the news of the Cessation came to that army; that they continued with the longest that time in the field, and that he sent on all occasions after that time part of his Regiment with the other forces, when they went abroad, partaking also in the dividend of the Cattle gotten from the Rebels, as others did who attended that service. And all this was constantly done after the Cessation;<sup>2</sup> and until the town of Belfast was possessed by Major General Monro, Col. Chichester being then only permitted to stay in the Castle with one hundred of his regiment and the rest of them at that time designed quarters in the parts near the town. And truly though Col. Chichester had submitted to the Cessation contrary to the directions of Parliament, yet why he should be therefore conceived as one that is in the condition of an Irish Rebel, and so to bring the place taken from him within the compass of

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<sup>1</sup> It will be perceived, from these and other expressions throughout the document, that this Report of the English Commissioners was made at a time subsequent to the event; in fact, as will afterwards appear, when the English Parliament desired to get Belfast into their hands, which the Scotch persistently refused. The Report is introduced in this place as it more naturally belongs to the preceding narrative of the surprisal of Belfast, and is in reality a continuation of the story.

<sup>2</sup> Would these Commissioners deem this just and honourable on the part of the English forces? So far from looking upon it in that light, they rather put it forward as evidence of Colonel Chichester's zeal, and as deserving of commendation. It is proof, however, of how much the English Parliament despised and condemned the Cessation.

the 10th Article of the Treaty of 6th August 1642 we understand not. And certainly his fault at the taking of this town from him, either was not apprehended so heinous, as some do since call it, or the indulgence great which was used towards him in permitting him to abide in the Castle with 100 of his men ; in quartering the rest of his Regiment near Belfast ; and suffering him to dispose of his stock without contradiction. And when he would remove, in allowing him to depart hence to Dublin, avowedly when he made no such condition for himself, but was at the pleasure of those who had both the town and him in their possession. We cannot but observe that this gentleness was more by many degrees than is usually afforded to Rebels ; or otherwise, that his offence at that time was not such as to be a sufficient ground or colour for taking, much less for keeping, the town of Belfast, and making such conclusions as are now drawn from thence."

The Commissioners conclude their Report by excusing and exculpating Colonel Chichester, saying that, if he did go to Dublin and join with Ormond, it ought to be considered that his own town was wrested from him, and how badly and treacherously he had been treated. Local details attending this seizure of Belfast by the Scotch will probably be still more interesting. Some of such have been preserved, and two—one directly connected with Monro's proceedings, and the other more remotely consequent on them—are here given from the original manuscripts.<sup>1</sup>

The following is a deposition connected with the capture of Belfast made by Captain John MacAdam :—

"The Examinant, aged about 28 years, or thereabouts, before the Right Hon. James Earl of Roscommon, and Sir James Ware, Knt., upon oath ministered by the Clerk of the Council the 14th day of June, 1644, Deposeth, that in the month of May last the Foot Company then commanded by Examinant in Colonel Arthur Chichester's Regiment being then quartered in Strandmilles, within less than a mile of Belfast, and the Examinant having necessary occasion to

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<sup>1</sup> These manuscripts are mixed up with the Antrim depositions of the outrages committed in that county in the rebellion of 1641, but have no connection with that subject. The entire are in one large volume in the Manuscript Room of Trinity College, Dublin, and have been recently examined by the author.

repair to Belfast, left the charge of his Company with one of his Sergeants, James (*illegible*), and he the Examinant went to Belfast where he lodged that night. And he sayeth that early the next morning one John Plunket, a gentleman then of the Examinant's Foot Company, came to the Examinant's chamber, and told him that the Foot Company were broken, and that many of them that were Covenanters had, by order of Major General Monro, marched that morning from Stranmillis to Belfast with drums, and colours flying, and that by like orders from Major General Monro they had that morning torn in pieces their colours in the Market Place of Belfast. Whereupon the Examinant, his chamber window looking into the Market Place, ran immediately to his chamber window, and looking out and seeing one Captain Kennedy, Captain of the Watch, in the Market Place, the Examinant called to the said Captain Kennedy, and taking notice to him of the mutinous and disordered carriage of the Examinant's said Company, desired the said Captain Kennedy to stay there until the Examinant could get ready and go to him. Whereupon the said Captain Kennedy answered that it was to no purpose, and that he would not do it, for that the said Company had done so by order of Major General Monro, and he the said Captain Kennedy had seen and read the said order under the hand of Major General Monro, whereby it was appointed that the said Company should march with colours and drums, as they did, to Belfast, and there openly in the Market Place tear the colours of the Examinant, as Captain of the said Company in Col. Chichester's Regiment; and that done, to march immediately with the said Company to Carrickfergus, and as the said Captain Kennedy then told the Examinant there was in the said order signed by Major General Monro, a clause requiring Colonel Hume who commanded the garrison at Belfast to be aiding and assisting to the operation of the said order."

The other document is descriptive of the political situation. It makes claims which in the present day would be described as perfectly reasonable, but were rather alarming to Mr. Theaker, the Sovereign, in 1644. The boldness of the Commonalty resulted from the influence of the Covenanting element introduced into the town, countenanced by General Monro and the military force.

"The Examination of Thomas Theaker, Suffraine of Belfast, taken the 18th day of July 1644 by the Right Honourable James Earle of

Roscommon, and Sir James Ware, Knight, &c., upon oath administered by the Clerke of the Councell.

“Who being duely sworne and examined Saith that since the Scotts have possessed themselves of Belfast they have erected a Presbytery there consisting of about Twenty Elders and fower Deacons, and that they have silenced one Mr. Brice and other ministers in the Scottish quarters for not taking the Covenant. He saith also that while he, this Examinant, was resident in Belfast, the free Commoners of the saide Towne (who have of them, except a very few, taken the Covenant) preferred a Petition to this Examinant, and to the Burgesses of the same, a true copy of which Petition followeth in these words, viz.: ‘The humble Request of the whole free Comoners of the Burrough of Belfast unto the Sovereigne and Free Burgesses of the same. First—Our Request is, and as wee conceive our Right is by His Maties letters patents, that we may all of us have our free votes in electing and choosing of Burgesses as occasion of vacancy may require; if not, wee protest against the Election as unlawfull. Further, our request is, that such men as shall be chosen to be free Burgesses bee of the Inhabitants and resident w<sup>th</sup>in our Corporation, and free of the same, and men of good respect, and such as have subscribed to the Covenant for the Reformation of Religion for the true worship and service of God, the Honor of our King, and good of his people—otherwise wee hould all other persons nominated, or elected to be chosen, to be Malignants, and wee protest against any other Election as unlawfull—whereas also there are some of the free Burgesses that are neither Inhabitants w<sup>th</sup>in the Corporation, neither assistants for any good or welfare of the same; therefore wee thinke it fitt that such shall bee removed, according to the Orders and Customes of this said Towne warranted by the said Letters Patents.’ He saith also, ‘that the said Peticion was delivered to him this Examinant about three Weekes since at w<sup>ch</sup> Time he kept Court for the Towne and Borrough of Belfast. But upon perusall of the contents of the Peticion, and finding the same to be of dangerous consequence he refused to assent thereunto, and having adjourned the Courte, w<sup>th</sup>in a few days after hee repayred to Dublin to acquaint Collonell Chichester, who is principally interested in the saide Towne, with the Contents of the said Peticion being still insisted upon by the said Comoners.’

“THO. THEAKER.”

The Confederate Irish, assembled in Kilkenny, were now a powerful party, and so incensed at the success of the Scots in

taking Belfast, at their utter disregard of the Cessation, and their entire attitude, that they proposed to the Lord Lieutenant to lead them to the North, as royalists like himself, to subdue the Covenanters. Ormond could not accede with safety to this proposition.<sup>1</sup> The Cessation was renewed at its termination in September, 1644, and the constant breaches of it continued to be fertile subjects of angry contention. The Confederates were uplifted by what they conceived to be their own superior position; and as the necessities of the King increased, unwisely endeavoured to obtain from his misfortunes undue privileges and power. Yet they were divided in their own councils; and the two sections of them had each military supporters in the field. It was expected by many sincere and influential leaders that the effect of the intricate discussions in progress would lead to a peace, which they finally did in 1646, but only with divided support. The battles between the King and the Parliament in England had gone in favour of the latter, and Charles was willing to grant now almost any favour to the Irish as the price of their active assistance, and in furtherance of this intention his friends and agents were obliged to treat with them on terms which he could not himself openly acknowledge. The Earl of Glamorgan, as every reader of the history of the civil wars is aware, was the emissary employed for this purpose. His arrival in Ireland preceded but a short time that of a nuncio or representative from the Papal government, a personage of extreme views; and these two, so high in station and ample in power, both real and suspected, still further elevated the hopes and enlarged the demands of the Confederate Irish.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Leland's *History of Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 225.

<sup>2</sup> Leland's *History of Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 251. For more extended information on the subject, see Curry's *Civil Wars*, vol. i., p. 300, *et seq.*; Clarendon, and numerous other writers.

One of the most distinguished men in the history of the civil wars was Lord Digby, brother of the Lady Mary Digby, wife of Colonel Chichester. He was a very eminent person, called by Swift, for his talents and accomplishments, "the prototype of Lord Bolingbroke." He was a Royalist, so staunch and determined that he was one of the few excepted by the Long Parliament from pardon. He



It is impossible to pursue the perplexing narrative which preceded the peace of 1646. Politicians at the time, at various periods since, and now, condemn the action of the Marquis of Ormond in this matter, declaring that his true policy was to have united with the moderate and more important portion of the Irish Confederate Catholics and not with the English Parliament. The nuncio, the leader and supporter of the extreme Irish party, was, on the other hand, an impracticable politician, and entirely resisted any peace. The English Parliament declared against Irish peace with equal vehemence, as did all the Parliamentarians, both in the North and South of Ireland; and Carte and the other apologists of the "great Duke" have not perhaps advocated his cause without due reason.<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, while negotiations were in progress, extending over a considerable period, the English party in Belfast and elsewhere in the North of Ireland, in spite of Monro's conduct in depriving them of this town, still considered it expedient to act with him against the common enemy, though there could not have been any very cordial union between them. In May, 1646, they fought together against Owen Roe O'Neill the great battle of Benburb, in which they were signally defeated by the Irish commander. O'Neill was dissatisfied with the peace, had united

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became Secretary of State; and in England, Ireland, and the Continent, acted with unceasing activity in the King's behalf. He arrested the Earl of Glamorgan in Ireland, took a leading part in the never-ending treaties and negotiations arising during the war, and in prominence every way was scarcely second even to Ormond himself. His career, it may be supposed, stimulated Colonel Chichester, his near relative, to imitate his example.

The following letter relates to the extended occupations of Lord Digby, and is a scrap of Belfast history to be taken for what it is worth. "1645, October 9th. Daniel O'Neill writing to Lord Digby under this date, says, The Scotch force the Covenant upon all the English, and the few towns the English possess are threatened to be plundered. That of your brother Arthur Chichester (*i.e.* Belfast) if your valiant sister had not prevented it had been gone last week." M'Skimin's MSS. quoting *King's Packet of Letters*. Could Lady Mary Chichester have resided in Belfast at this time among the disturbed elements which it contained?

<sup>1</sup> The recent reprint of the *Unkinde Deserter*, so adverse to Ormond, is worth studying by inquirers into the history of the civil wars.

himself with the nuncio, and if he had followed up this important battle, victories equally memorable might have marked his course; but he was called away by his spiritual guide and secular director to the south of Ireland, and lost the opportunity.

The Lord Lieutenant was obliged to hasten the conclusion of a peace with some party, and with the Parliament he resolved to deal, rather than with the Irish. Parliamentary Commissioners were accordingly named to treat with him for the surrender of his government,<sup>1</sup> and that while the capital was actually besieged by the Irish army. The leaders of this army had also their own dissensions, and when intelligence came of the arrival in Ireland of a force from England, they separated, and drew off their followers to other places. This again inspired Ormond with hopes of being able to make more favourable terms with the Commissioners. The demands on both sides are stated at length,<sup>2</sup> and so far as any amicable understanding at first came to that the Commissioners directed their troops to be re-embarked and proceed to Belfast, where, as will be presently seen, they were received by Monro and the Scotch, then dominant here, with no great favour. No other course was open to the Lord Lieutenant but to resume his negotiations with the Parliament. This was accordingly done. Four important persons, of whom Colonel Chichester was one,<sup>3</sup> were sent to England, and placed in the power of that high court, as hostages for the due performance of the treaty. Ormond resigned the government. The Parliament assumed the reins of power with the same enemies in their midst, and the same conflicting interests in operation.

It is necessary to enter into these details to account for the presence and proceedings of the Commissioners, and the army which accompanied them, in Belfast in 1646. They went thither as directed, and found that the estrangement between the Scots and English had not diminished. In the words of an author very well qualified to treat the subject, "the Commissioners were

<sup>1</sup> Leland's *History of Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 298.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 302.

<sup>3</sup> See Leland's *History of Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 309.

to organise a party in Ulster, prepared, when called on, to support the Parliament in opposition to the Scots. Mutual jealousies between these confederated allies had already ripened into public alienation, which not long after terminated in open hostility.”<sup>1</sup> Ever since Belfast had been taken by Monro, the Parliament had desired, so far without effect, to get it out of his hands; he still held it with a tenacious grasp, and informed the Scottish Government that, if they gave up Belfast, they might likewise part with all their interest in Ulster. As a garriſon town, well situated, and now fortified in a ſufficient manner, this ſtatement, though exaggerated, is not without conſiderable truth. At all events, it was the opinion expreſſed by General Monro, and with this eſtimate of the value of the place deſired, and with unfriendly ſentiments towards the party claiming it, we come at laſt to relate in their own words the reception which the Commiſſioners received in the town. They informed the Committee at Derby Houſe from Dublin on 23rd November, that they would ſend on the ſhips, with a quorum of the Commiſſioners, viz., Sir Robert King, Sir John Clotworthy, and Sir Robert Meredith, to Belfast in charge of the forces, with £3500, part of the £5000 with which they had been entrusted for the public ſervice. They then proceed to ſtate that “they arrived in Belfast Lough at the latter end of November, and landed part of their men at Groomſport, part on the Antrim ſide, and ſome at firſt they left on ſhipboard; for the Scotch abſolutely reſuſed to allow a man of the Engliſh army to enter Belfast, but they did not or dared not reſuſe entrance to the Commiſſioners themſelves. On the 1ſt December they wrote to Monro, informing him of their arrival; they detail the ſufferings of their men in the open fields, and demand quarters for them in Belfast.”

Monro answered the ſame day in the following terms:—

“HONBLE. SIRS,

“As I am glad of your ſafe arrival ſo I do heartily wiſh for the continuance of mutual love and frienſhip between all the

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<sup>1</sup> Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, vol. ii., p. 15.

forces intended against the common enemy; and that their coming and yours may administer occasion of advantage rather than prejudice either to the army or country. As touching their quartering at Belfast, if you have a directed order from the Committee of both Kingdoms for that effect to the Commander-in-Chief of that Garrison I do not doubt but it will be readily obeyed by him, who must answer for his deportment to the General of the Army the Earl of Leven; if, otherwise, that be wanting, I believe the Colonel will be loath to part with his Garrison, till such time as he knows of his Excellency's pleasure, which was the stop to the Parliament's demands the last year concerning the giving up of that garrison, as is known to Sir Robert King when Captain Kennedy was sent expressly into Scotland for that end. For my part, be pleased to know that my command over Colonel Hume's garrison cannot reach so far as to put him from it, unless I was acquainted with the General's pleasure, being more than I would answer for on my Life and Credit. Therefore I humbly intreat for your favourable construction in a matter of this moment, and I shall ever strive to approve myself as becometh the faithful servant of the public, and

“Your affectionate friend

and humble servant,

“ROBERT MONRO.

“CARRICKFERGUS, *1st December, 1646.*

“To the Honble. the Commissioners  
of the Parliament of England,  
Residing at Belfast.”

The Commissioners again write to Monro, and, informing him how unsatisfactory it must be for the Parliament if the forces which they have sent hither should perish with cold for want of harbour in any town, being kept from such relief by persons serving in the same cause, Monro replies that he is exceedingly sorry for the hardship of the troops; but, touching Belfast, he adds, “I protest to God I cannot vary from what I have already declared without an express command from the Earl of Leven, General to the Scotch army in Ireland, for it being contrary to the treaty that we should mix in quartering (if any inconvenience should happen thereby, as the Lord forbid) the General would call me to an account for the same, as he may do if I con-

sent to give up any of our garrisons without his knowledge. I intreat you to rest satisfied and not press me beyond my power." He thinks, however, the Commissioners may obtain accommodation for the soldiers, "such as this poor country can afford," among the British regiments; and adds, "that disputes and controversy will not fail to break out and ensue if the forces are mixed with the Scotch regiments, who will not willingly part with their quarters."

The Commissioners, finding they can make no impression on Monro, write to Colonel Hume, who was the commander in Belfast, forwarding the following letter to him by their secretary:—

"At BELFAST, 7th December, 1646.

"We, the Commissioners sent from the Parliament of England according to our Commission of the 16th November being commanded to direct the forces to Belfast, and having upon our arrival acquainted Major General Monro with their being come to quarters in this place, that so the Parliament might receive satisfaction, and their forces convenient shelter and accommodation, necessary for the preservation of their lives in this winter season, and finding the answer returned to us in his letters unsatisfactory, withall importing that his command over you in this place could not reach so far as to put you from the same—We do therefore by this require to know from you by whose authority you have garrisoned this town, and that we may see what order you have for keeping the same, and know your positive resolution, whether or no you will allow the forces directed hither by the Parliament and now landed, to be garrisoned in this town of Belfast according to the directions of the Parliament of England. To which we desire your present answer in writing signed by you."

The Colonel, as well as the General, was obdurate; and both were resolved to hold the town for the Scottish Parliament. Colonel Hume, however, with due speed, replies to the demands of the Commissioners on the 9th December, humbly craving their patience, and stating "that he is but a servant of the public sent hither by command from his Majesty and the Commissioners of both kingdoms, and being entrusted with the keeping of the place I cannot take upon me to garrison any forces therein until

I acquaint the State of Scotland, the which I shall do with all possible diligence.”

The Commissioners being thus repulsed drew up a formal paper detailing the whole proceedings from the original capture of Belfast by Monro, and his conduct to Colonel Chichester, taking part with the latter, and rebuking the General; all which has previously appeared in connection with Monro’s version of what he designated “The Surrender of Belfast.” They forwarded this document by Lieut.-Colonel Conolly, who had now risen to military rank from his small beginning in Sir John Clotworthy’s household, to the Parliament and Estates of Scotland and the Earl of Leven, instructing him to render an explanation to them of any details they might require, and desiring him to remain in Scotland no longer than six days.

An answer was delivered to Conolly on the last day of December, but he did not arrive in Belfast till 10 o’clock on the night of the 8th January following. The answer was not much more explicit than those which the Commissioners had received from their correspondents here. It merely informed them that “their own Commissioners were then in London treating for the surrender of Belfast, and that they cannot stultify them by giving up the town now, but they have written to General Monro to quarter his army as closely as possible for the accommodation of the English forces, and to allow them the use of houses in the town for stores and magazines.”

The possession of Belfast must have been considered in 1646 a point of great importance, when it engaged the attention of the highest authorities, and drew into the dispute so many celebrated persons. The English Parliament, then almost the great source of power, had not been regardless of events in this corner of Ireland. Early in 1646 a paper was presented to it by Sir John Clotworthy, importing that—“By order of the Lords and Commons assembled in Parliament, of the 13th November, 1645, the Commissioners residing in Ulster for the Parliament of England are directed to require from the officers that keep the town of Belfast the delivery thereof to such as shall be appointed by the



Parliament to receive the same;" and by another letter from both Houses, of 24th November, 1645, the Parliament of Scotland is desired, lest there should be any failure in the former order, whereupon so much of the good conduct of that affair dependeth, that their directions may be sent to the officers commanding in Ireland—"That the town of Belfast be delivered, according to the former order, by the 11th of January following, for the accommodation of that service."

In answer to the order of 13th November, 1645, Colonel Hume, in the name of himself and the other officers to whom it was addressed, craves patience until they acquaint the State of Scotland and their General, a reply similar to that given to the impatient Commissioners in the town; and to the application direct from the English Parliament in the same month, the Earl of Crawford, by his letter of the 8th January, 1646, and directed to the Speakers of both Houses, replies—

"That they might return a speedy and full answer immediately to the Parliament of England they had despatched an express to Ireland to know from them that commanded the Scotch army the ground whereupon that Town (of Belfast) was first invested, and since fortified and kept by them, and so rest confident that when the House consider the season of the year and uncertain passage twixt Scotland and Ireland, they will not mistake the delay of their answer which they will labour to hasten with all diligence."

The great Parliament, however, declares that it has received no satisfactory answer whatever from Scotland as yet, "but understanding from their Commissioners that one of the Captains of the Town of Belfast was despatched thence to acquaint the State of Scotland with the order sent into Ireland they patiently expected that return." And they received a second answer from Colonel Hume in Belfast, dated the 17th of February, which mentions "that the State of Scotland had written back to their own Commissioners at London so satisfactory an answer to be given to the Parliament that they doubt not it will give them all content, and till he hears from thence desires to be excused."

It appears to have been all mere quibbling and evasion on the side of the Scotch, and at this point of the controversy the following distinct declaration from the English Parliament is issued :—

“Now, forasmuch, as the Town of Belfast is not yet delivered according to the several orders of both Houses of the Parliament of England, and that the Commissioners of Scotland now residing in London have been so far from giving any just satisfactory answer to the Parliament as is mentioned in the letter of Colonel Hume of 17th February last,—they have not given any answer at all. Therefore it is desired and demanded of both Houses of the Parliament of England that the Commissioners of the Kingdom of Scotland do immediately send orders to Col. Hume, who is the Commander of Belfast, presently to deliver that town to such persons as the Parliament of England shall appoint to receive the same.”<sup>1</sup>

Even this peremptory, almost threatening demand, was ineffectual. The Scots had possession of Belfast, and were resolved to keep it. They would not have the English soldiers in the town, but proposed that they should quarter in Lecale, in County Down, then occupied by Colonel Hamilton. The Commissioners were obliged to be contented in the meantime with this offer, Colonel Hume engaging to allow them constant communication with their storehouses in Belfast; on which they marched to Lecale, and quartered themselves there in the most advantageous manner they were able.

Thus ends this long and purely local history. The letters which compose it have been extracted with care, though not consecutive in the original. The subject and details all cling together, and the tendencies, wishes, and designs of the parties are apparent. This confusing paper war was without much result beyond widening the differences between the representatives of the two nations—this small town being the subject of dispute, the foundation of the quarrel. It is, in little, the national history of the time. The Commissioners of the Parliament still

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<sup>1</sup> These Letters are all in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

kept their ground in Belfast, and took upon themselves the charge of affairs of great moment.

The Revenue engaged their attention, though they had, perhaps, but a divided interest in that department, as it was hardly to be expected that Monro would be scrupulous in advancing his claims in the same direction. But it is inconceivable how any revenue could have been collected in such disordered times. The Commissioners alone, however, in name, appear as collectors and controllers of the public funds,<sup>1</sup> such as they were. The country was all impoverished. Sums were constantly being required for "the poor inhabitants of this wasted country," as was the language of some of the petitions. Persons of rank and station,<sup>2</sup> now under a grievous eclipse, make frequent applications for support, representing that all their goods were taken in the first instance by the rebels, and their accruing rents appropriated with as little ceremony by the Scots.

The Parliament, though debarred from the possession of Belfast, were still expected to be the paymasters of the Scotch forces. One of the inquiries of the officers of that party to the Commissioners was, "now that they had come they hoped they had not done so without money for them of the Scotch army, who

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<sup>1</sup> William Beale was one of those, and described as Commissioner from the Committee of Adventurers. From his signature to documents in Belfast, in conjunction with Arthur Annesley and others, it seemed as if he had also been accredited with powers to act with the other Commissioners in regulating the revenue. The reader who desires to know the meaning of "the Adventurers" is referred to *The Cromwellian Settlement of Ireland*, by J. P. Prendergast, Esq.

<sup>2</sup> One of these petitioners was Lady Martha O'Neill, widow of Sir Henry O'Neill, who declares "that at the beginning of the rebellion she had, in her own right, and that of her children left to her care, an estate of £2200 per annum; that most of her house and stores had been taken by the Rebels, and the remainder to maintain the Scottish army, as appears by the certificates of the officers and Commissioners; that she cannot now support herself or her children, and desires that some part of the money of the Army may be given to her, and some yearly maintenance while the Scots have the benefit of her estate.

"To be reported to the House."

The estate thus desolated by the Scotch army was Shane's Castle, the property of her late husband, Sir Henry O'Neill, who was grandson, as this lady was great-grand-daughter, of Sir Brian M'Phelim O'Neill, of Elizabeth's time. She was daughter of Sir Francis Stafford, sometime Governor of Ulster.

had long waited for relief from the Parliament." More urgent home affairs had withdrawn attention from the necessities of their Ulster allies, which were sometimes very great. Still, General Monro was not cordial or friendly in his intercourse with the Commissioners even in small matters, as his answer to them, when they made a very moderate request, fully proves. They asked him for some intrenching tools, for which, it is most probable, English money had been paid. He informs them that since the battle of Benburb such a desire for intrenching had arisen that *all* his tools were used up, and that, besides, *they were very bad*.

But if the battle of Benburb weakened Monro, it drew together for a space all parties against Owen O'Neill and the extreme Catholic influence. The English Parliament determined to prosecute the war by their own troops, even wishing the Scots to leave Ulster, to ward off the possibility of collision with them. This could not be effected. Disputes about their pay, and open conflict of opinion on religious and political polity, disturbed the peace of their ranks. Yet a kind of weak accord was maintained. George Monk, of famous memory, was appointed by the Parliament to command in Ulster, and was actually in that position in Lisburn when Monro held possession so near as Belfast. But many of the Scots now began to desert the cause of the Parliament; a proportion of their countrymen at home were contending for the King; an invasion of England in the royal interest, and many important occurrences, were in progress. Sir George Monro<sup>1</sup> was the leader of this movement here, and, a considerable number of the Scotch accompanying him, left the north of Ireland to assist those either in Scotland or England who were endeavouring to restore kingly power. It has been truly said, that "the English Parliament were naturally indignant that any of the Scottish forces in Ulster, ostensibly engaged in their service, and clamorous for arrears of pay, should join with their opponents

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<sup>1</sup> Sir George Monro was nephew, and also son-in-law, to Major-General Robert Monro, and early embraced the royal cause.

in the invasion of England.”<sup>1</sup> They at once exhibited their displeasure by sending to Monk, in Lisburn, this letter :—

“TO COLONEL MONK.

“We have formerly written to you concerning Belfast which the Scots ought not to have had at all. And we again desire you to use all the means in your power to put the said town of Belfast in possession of the Parliament of England ; and that you will take care that none land in Ireland out of Scotland, or any of those that are in England in arms against the Commonwealth may come over ; and we have written to Captain Clarke to ply up and down the coast to prevent them.

“29th August, 1648.”<sup>2</sup>

When Parliament was informed of the Duke of Hamilton’s overthrow, who had unsuccessfully invaded England to support the now tottering cause of royalty, they again direct Monk “to inspect and inquire what Scotch regiments that had been in Ireland were concerned with it.” These directions, and the commanding position of the English, precipitated immediate action, and led to the transfer of Belfast from those who had ruled in it since May 1644. The displacement of Monro is succinctly related by a contemporary :—

“Monk, with considerable Forces, met in Night time, and marched to Knockfergus Gate, which at break of day was opened to them by Captain Coghran, that night Captain of the Watch ; and without delay or opposition Major-General Munroe was taken in his house, and made prisoner, and within four days sent to the Parliament of England with one Major Burgh, of Lisnegarvy.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Reid’s *History of the Presbyterian Church*, vol. ii., p. 71.

<sup>2</sup> From the *Pinkerton MSS.*

<sup>3</sup> This is a quotation from *The Irish Warre of 1641*, p. 65, a small volume recently printed from the original manuscript. It was written by a witness of, and a partaker in, the war. The author was an officer in Sir John Clotworthy’s regiment, a Protestant, probably a native of Ulster, and his references to the north of Ireland are peculiarly interesting. The little book bears every mark of authenticity. The principal object of its publication appears to have been to counteract the effects of Mr. Froude’s work, *The English in Ireland*, which, on one long-contested point, it fully contradicts. This point is with regard to the number of Protestants killed in Ireland at the beginning of the rebellion, which

Thus also, by stratagem or surprise, as he had himself practised regarding Belfast four years before, was Monro, in his turn, supplanted in Carrickfergus.<sup>1</sup> That town, as a matter of course, surrendered, as did Belfast immediately after, without offering any opposition. The Parliament had at length obtained the place they had so long wished for, and on Monk's recommendation Colonel Maxwell was appointed Governor of this town.

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the writer, who lived at the time, makes few, in comparison, at least, with the monstrous number often mentioned. An entirely similar view is taken by Lord Macartney in an abstract of Irish history, written by him, and inserted in his *Life*, and now by many others. It has probably been printed in advocacy of the principle of judging the history of those times from what is called "the Irish point of view."

<sup>1</sup> In a letter to the Marquis of Ormond from London, dated 5th October, 1648, there are these remarks on Monro's character and proceedings in connection with his capture:—"Old Monro is taken in Ireland by Col. Monk with the assistance of the old Scots of Ulster who were weary of their new brethren and countrymen; and with him the two garrisons of Belfast and Carrickfergus. He was brought up prisoner on Sunday last to the Tower, and Monk is voted £500 for his good services. Some think that Monro's fee is far more than that comes to, and that he sold rather than lost these Garrisons. And the presumption is partly grounded upon this, that the ship that brought him over waited a fortnight in sight of one of those garrisons before the design was ripe."



## CHAPTER VII.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

WHILE the proceedings last narrated placed Belfast in the hands of the Parliament, the war continued in other parts of the kingdom. Ormond returned to Ireland, and succeeded in settling another peace in 1648, though met, as before, by ecclesiastical opposition. The strife of parties was unabated. There was scarcely a great leader among them all who had not at some period broken off from former associates; the friends of this year were the enemies of the next, and some were constrained to act in concert with those to whom they were, in other essential relations, utterly opposed. Even Owen Roe O'Neill, probably the greatest general whom the war produced, and in most respects an admirable character,<sup>1</sup> may be said to have given in his adhesion, more or less pronounced, to each of the several parties who participated in it. Ormond had before made overtures to the dissatisfied Scots, which were not unfavourably received; intrigues and secret treaties were incessant on all sides, but the peace of 1648 was necessarily hastened by the alarming accounts of the speedy trial of the King and his possible condemnation, which was abhorrent to the opinions of the great majority of the contending parties in Ireland. But this had no effect in averting the fate of the monarch, whose death on the scaffold soon after took place.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For an excellent epitome of the character of Owen Roe O'Neill, and his career in Ireland, see the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. iv., p. 25.

<sup>2</sup> It was at this crisis the famous controversy between the illustrious Milton and the Presbytery of Belfast took place on public events. Milton's language is very severe against "the blockish Presbyters of Clondeboyne," as he calls them; he denominates their Assembly "*that unchristian Synagogue of Belfast*;" their place of meeting, "Belfast, a small town in the North of Ireland," and, after-

Charles the Second was proclaimed King, and was invited by his friends and adherents here to come to Ireland, as the true field on which to oppose the Parliament. He was disposed to do so, and if he had joined his fortune to that of the strong party who had coalesced in this country in his favour, it is quite possible the Restoration might not have been so long delayed. But it was fated that he should go to Scotland instead, where defeat followed him, and where he left behind only the memory of deceitful and broken vows.

The part which Belfast took in the great events which followed, and which had the effect of rendering the Parliamentary government of the town on this occasion of short continuance, was but subordinate. The reaction in favour of monarchy, in consequence of the measures which had taken place, was soon displayed. The rupture between the Scots, who only went so far in their views as to uphold the ancient government of King, Lords, and Commons, with the Covenant and ecclesiastical interference or supremacy superadded, and the Parliament, who would have none of these things except the last of the three, the Commons, was soon complete. The Covenanters and old Royalists, in the portion of the kingdom with which this history deals, were both in opposition to the recent measures of the Commonwealth of England. Sir George Monro had united with Ormond the Lord Lieutenant openly—Lord Montgomery and others secretly, though hitherto reputed friends and supporters of the Scotch interest. All these movements, public and private, could not pass so near Monk—who, in the language

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wards, “*a barbarous nook of Ireland;*” they are themselves, in his estimation, but a “*generation of Highland thieves and redshanks;*” and because of their weak arguments and unbounded intolerance and assumptions, “*egregious liars and impostors.*” Strong language would appear to have been permissible in those days, and scraps of this kind coming from so great a man as Milton, and directed to Belfast, more engage the attention now than the general tendency of the reasonings on each side which promulgate ideas long since exploded. Milton was in advance of the Presbytery in largeness of view as to religious liberty. The controversy at length is in Milton’s works, but will be most accessible to the reader, it is likely, in the *Historical Collections relative to the Town of Belfast*, where the portion printed occupies no less than twenty pages, pp. 29–49.

of the times, "commanded in these parts"—without his immediate knowledge. He communicated with the party, which was bound, or expected, in his estimation, to maintain a Parliamentary government; and, after some correspondence, the officers, among whom were two lords, Montgomery and Clanbrassil, informed him, after a solemn meeting, that they required him, and all under his command, to subscribe the Covenant, and to abjure the power and practices of the sectarian army in England, who had endeavoured to establish an impious toleration in the Church, to keep the late usurped power in their own hands, and to put down the authority of King, Lords, and Commons. The subject is entered upon at length in the *History of the Presbyterian Church*,<sup>1</sup> and Belfast was much interested in the controversy. It was in the possession of those whose chiefs had done, or were about to do, all the things imputed to them. Sir George Monro was hovering around to serve the King, and now the military power, of Scotch birth or extraction, also declared for the same cause. Monk was, therefore, constrained to watch his position; lay and clerical opponents were both near him, and to get Belfast out of his hands again seemed to them the first step to weaken his influence.

Monk acted evasively with the officers and ministers about the renewal of the Covenant, from which he was disposed to waver. Coote, the other principal leader in Ulster, openly, rejected it. The inhabitants of Belfast, for the few weeks which the Parliament continued to keep possession of the town, were no doubt greatly disturbed by these events, having, it is to be supposed, their own disputes. The means by which Parliamentary rule was now brought to an end in Belfast will be best disclosed by a contemporary, even Patrick Adair himself the future minister of Belfast. Adair's account of this, the third change of masters in Belfast, is in these words:—

"While this is doing, Monro was secretly commanded to come to Belfast, and threaten to take it, the design of the Lord of Ards

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. ii., p. 97.

(Montgomery) being to have Colonel Wallace out of it, who had been appointed Governor of Belfast by the Council of War to please the Presbytery. Monro accordingly hastened to Belfast, and threatened to fire it. It was found not well enough manned and furnished to resist, upon which the Lord of Ards, with common advice, sent for a considerable party from his own regiment to assist Belfast garrison against Monro, and the gentlemen and ministers were ordered to go home from the hazard of the enemy. Thus, Ard's men entered publickly the town, where, having secured himself, he then declared indeed what he was, produced his commission from King Charles the Second, and discharged Wallace of his trust. This treachery of the Lord of Ards was an astonishing surprisal to the ministers and country who formerly had concurred with him. . . . Mr. Antony Shaw, minister of Belfast, did with great zeal and ministerial authority upbraid him before his officers. . . . Monro came with his forces near Belfast. . . . The Presbytery used all means with the Committee of War not to enter into any treaty with the Lord of Ards or George Monro, in regard they now acted in the old malignant quarrel of the King's Commission, and thereby owned the King to be in the full exercise of his power without giving any security for religion.

. . . Besides, the Lord of Ards and his party were now associated and embodied with the party under Ormond, which consisted only of enemies to the work of reformation—not only haters of the Covenant, but entertainers of Papists and rebels.”<sup>1</sup>

The condition of Belfast and the country near may be seen from all this. The community was divided into three main sections: that of the Presbyterians, who are represented by

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<sup>1</sup> Adair's *Narrative*, p. 168.

The ecclesiastical party took Montgomery strongly to task for his conduct at this time. “Who would have believed,” they say, “that your Lordship would have avowed a Commission from the King when he yet refuses as much as his Father to secure Religion but follows wicked counsel, and so avowedly to violate that Article of your Declaration; or that you would own a wicked association of *Irish Papists*, and under colour of strengthening should have betrayed that garrison of Belfast.” This is related, so far as personal to Montgomery, more at length in M'Skimin's *History of Carrickfergus*, p. 58. Lord Montgomery, in a letter to the Presbytery from Belfast, June 30th, says he wished only to secure the garrisons of the North from Sir George Monro, and to advance religion according to the Covenant. Sir George was then besieging Carrickfergus, which had to surrender, as Belfast had done; and Lord Montgomery, in the face of all his protestations, joined him the next day.

Adair to have had such influence as to displace the Governor of Belfast appointed by Monk after the discomfiture of General Robert Monro, and to put Colonel Wallace, a true friend to their cause, in his room; that of the English Parliament, or Republicans, whose power was now reduced to a very low ebb; and that of the Royalists, guided by the Lord Lieutenant from a distant part of Ireland, where he had Catholics and Protestants both on his side, and whose coadjutor here was Sir George Monro, assisted now by Lord Montgomery, and others of the same class, who had openly joined with him. There was no Catholic influence in Belfast, but the other two had partisans, perhaps about equally balanced. This town was, as Adair informs us, "the place where country gentlemen and officers then most haunted;" and the change to the royal interest by the manœuvring of Lord Montgomery was not likely to have diminished these meetings for the discussion of public affairs. It is not known to what individual, if any, the guardianship of the town was entrusted by the Royalists for the short time they were permitted to retain it. Monk went to England, so that the Parliament was not represented in Belfast by any high or influential person. This was but of short continuance. Oliver Cromwell arrived in Ireland on the 15th August, 1649, with a large army, only a few weeks after these Belfast transactions. When he had taken Drogheda, he despatched a strong force to reduce the northern garrisons, of which Belfast was one, to the authority of the Parliament. Cromwell himself never came farther north than Drogheda, the troops to accomplish his object in Belfast and elsewhere in that direction having been led by Colonel Robert Venables, so much afterwards identified with this town.

When the Parliamentary army reached Belfast they summoned it at once to surrender. There was some demur about immediate compliance, on which Venables sat down before the town, and at the end of three or four days, as Captain Meredith<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There is a MS. account of the progress of this party northward from Drogheda to Belfast, concluding with a most brief relation of the taking of this town. It was written by Captain Meredith, one of the officers, and is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

says, it surrendered to him upon articles, the tenor of which is not known. This was the only instance, during the civil wars, of Belfast having sustained a siege, if such it can be called, the town on previous occasions passing from one competitor to another by stratagem rather than by force. A version of the treatment of some of the residents is not favourable to the besiegers. "Venables took Belfast about the middle of October, 1649. There were fifteen pieces of ordnance and twelve barrels of gunpowder in the town; 800 Scots were turned out of it, whither they had brought their wives and children to inhabit." This was an eviction on too large a scale to be credible. There may have been some transplantation,<sup>1</sup> or the story possibly had its foundation in the opposition given to the Parliamentary troops by George Martin, who held the unenviable office of Sovereign of Belfast in 1649, and having refused—being, it must be supposed, of Covenanting tendencies—to use his influence to find accommodation for the soldiers, they pillaged his dwelling, seized his goods and property, and in his alarm he fled to Scotland.

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<sup>1</sup> The authorities for this are the MSS. of Henry Joy, of Belfast, and those of Samuel M'Skimin, author of the *History of Carrickfergus*, in the possession of the Rev. Classon Porter, of Larne, by whom they have been kindly lent to me. They are so united that the distinctive portion of each is not readily seen. The statement they contain, however, is substantially that which is in the text, the exact words being—"1649. About Michaelmas this year a battle was fought at Buller's Fields between the Royal Army and that of the Parliament. The former was defeated, and Venables the Commander then entered the Town. George Martin, who was great-great-grandfather to Henry Joy, Dr. Bruce's contemporary, being determined not to grant Billets, retired to his Country House near the White House, in consequence of which his house in town was plundered. . . . On this occasion Venables, who had previously taken the Garrisons of Lisnegarvie and Antrim, also took the Scots' strong garrison of Belfast, with 15 pieces of Ordnance and 12 Barrels of Gunpowder, and 800 Scots were afterwards turned out of the town, whither they had brought their wives and children to settle themselves." The general statement was published by authority in the *List of Victories obtained by Cromwell and the Parliament's Forces, 1650*, and is quoted by Wright, in his *History of Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 78. Mr. Martin will come under notice again. There is an obscure tradition that a contest, or skirmish, happened between the parties outside the town, at Buller's Fields, which were at the top of Donegall Street and the present York Street; and that many years ago, when a cotton mill was being built near this place, proof of such was discovered in marks of entrenchments, and the discovery of some balls and other articles.



All warlike action did not cease with this Parliamentary triumph. A contest, which had now extended to eight years, which had caused so many battles, and awakened so much animosity, could not calm down at once. It continued for two years more. Some of the most serious conflicts of the entire war happened in this final period, one of which was not very distant from Belfast, and is thus alluded to by a person living about thirty years after the event. Describing roads from Lisburn, the writer says, "There is a way which turns to the right hand and which leads by Lysnastrean, where a battle was fought between the late Earl of Mountalexander, Sr George Mounroe, &c., for the King, and, as I take it, Sr Charles Coot and Col. Venables for the Parliament, where the most just cause fared worst."<sup>1</sup> They did, indeed, fare worst. The men of the Covenant and the Royalists were defeated, and the results of this battle formed a theme of loud gratulation from the victors to the Parliament. It took place in December of the memorable year 1649, and before Venables, who was one of the chief actors in it, could have had time to do much in settling his position in Belfast. The war, for the rest of its duration, was entirely in other parts of the kingdom. Ormond and his adherents persevered in their opposition to the Parliament, but it was useless. All parties were finally subdued; and first a Commonwealth, then a Protectorate, arose in succession on the ruins of monarchy, and for ten more years governed the country with firm but arbitrary dominion.

Before this final conclusion of the struggle in this place the Lord Edward Chichester had died. He does not seem to have continued in Belfast or Ireland during the civil wars, but must have gone soon to England. He died there in July, 1648, and was buried at Eggesford, in Devon, among the relations of his first wife, Ann Coplestone, the mother of his children. His eldest son, the Colonel Chichester so frequently mentioned, succeeded as first Earl of Donegall.

The corporate body of Belfast, during the Commonwealth and

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<sup>1</sup> Dobbs' *Account of the County of Antrim*, 1687.

Protectorate, was somewhat overruled by the government which had conquered the country, but not disturbed, so far as can be discovered, in those relations which tend to substantial progress. The position of the Lord of the Castle may have been, for the time, suspended; the Sovereign may have been sworn in before a military governor or his deputy; and the Charter may have been more indifferently respected and observed than in past days. The majority of the inhabitants were Presbyterians; the government was considered, by many, but unsubstantial, and soon to be supplanted by one when the Stuarts would have their own again, and the Chichesters dwell once more in peace in the Castle of Belfast. It was a most interesting period in the history of the town, leaving its impress on the inhabitants, and communicating to them a spirit of enterprise and independence. Trade must have been active,<sup>1</sup> and wealth on the increase, reckoning how comparatively insignificant trade and wealth were everywhere at the time; and during the stable rule of the Cromwellian Government no enemy ever again appeared at the gates of the town to interrupt its onward course.

Belfast was, likewise, not without parliamentary representation, Cromwell, among his other projects, having inaugurated a

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<sup>1</sup> The negative argument, at least, in proof of these assertions is, that in 1651 Antrim was charged with the largest monthly assessment to maintain the army of any county in Ulster. The amount was £1500, Down was £1250; Fermanagh and Tyrone were the lowest, having been but £150 and £100 respectively. Belfast must have been greatly the means of meeting this large County Antrim contribution.

In further confirmation of advancement in this place, it may be noted that in October, 1652, the relative sums raised monthly in the Ulster precincts were, in

Down,	£1300	...	...	...	Forage, £357	0	0
Antrim,	1450	...	...	..	„	398	15 0
Donegall,	750	...	...	...	„	206	5 0
Tyrone,	250	...	...	...	„	168	15 0
Armagh,	100	...	...	...	„	27	10 0
Londonderry,	300	...	...	...	„	82	10 0
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£4150		£1240 15 0					

Proving also in this year the superiority of Antrim and Down to any of the other Ulster counties. These returns are unconnected scraps, but they prove relative proportions.

union between the parliaments of the three kingdoms, in which Colonel Venables and Colonel Arthur Hill were to be returned for the counties of Down, Antrim, and Armagh, and Major Daniel Redmond for the towns of Carrickfergus and Belfast. No other members for this town are known to have been chosen since Sir William Wrey and Major Rawdon were elected to the Irish Parliament in 1639, in more approved form. Cromwell's scheme did not end to his satisfaction, and none but these military men, who were chosen in 1654 as three of the thirty members who were to represent Ireland, have been discovered as participating in it. The Colonel Hill here mentioned was one of Cromwell's subservient friends, and ancestor of the Downshire family.

Ireland was divided by the Cromwellian Government into fifteen Precincts, of which Belfast and Carrickfergus, with extensive and defined limits, comprising the three counties of Antrim, Down, and Armagh, formed one. Each Precinct was put in charge of Commissioners, with large powers. In the Belfast Precinct, the Scots, averse to the Government, and generally indisposed to take the Engagement,<sup>1</sup> naturally abounded. As the ruling powers had thought fit to transplant the Irish to Connaught, so they considered that their own safety required the removal of the Scots also to places in Ireland far from their parent home or the kingdom from which they sprang. The names of those to be so treated have been made known,<sup>2</sup> and were those of the principal, and to the Government the most obnoxious Presbyterian landholders and others in Down and Antrim. Those in Belfast proper and Malone were only Lieutenant Thomas Corston or Cranston, Corporal Thomas M'Cormick, Hugh Doke, Robert Cluxton, George Martin, Alexander Lockard, Robert King, and Quintin Catherwood, probably the most openly pronounced or loudest speakers against the powers that were. The number is much greater in most of the other quarters,

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<sup>1</sup> The Engagement was "to be true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England as it is now established, without King or House of Lords."

<sup>2</sup> Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, vol. ii., p. 471, Appendix.

comprising persons of known station and influence. Some of these went as agents from the general body, who were to remove to make way for the soldiers and adventurers, to whom portions of the County Antrim were allotted, to spy the promised land in Leinster and Munster, where their future homes were to be. Before the proceedings reached this length, great correspondence<sup>1</sup> between the Commissioners appointed to effect this Scottish transplanting and the Government took place, with proclamations, changes of plan, and particular arrangements, exhibiting more mildness and consideration towards the sturdy Scots than to the more subdued and more persecuted Irish. It, however, did not take effect, having been considered at last—on account of parliamentary changes in England, it is generally alleged—as inexpedient. The Scots still remained to advance the country, and to lay the foundations of its future prosperity.<sup>2</sup>

It has been said that but limited materials exist for the history of the Commonwealth in Ireland.<sup>3</sup> This can scarcely refer to Belfast, where, perhaps, the preponderance of the Presbyterian

<sup>1</sup> Papers connected with this project are in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, and are most extensive, but do not relate to Belfast. As they contain many instructive points in the history of the Cromwellian government, a portion of them will be found in Appendix No. 8.

<sup>2</sup> It is worth recording that the baronies in the county of Antrim drawn for the soldiers and adventurers, a moiety of which was to be given to them, were—

*For the Soldiers :*

Glenarm, Antrim, Toome, Kilconway, Carey.

*For the Adventurers :*

Belfast, Dunluce, Massereene, Carrickfergus.

In the county of Down, also, Castlereagh, Lecale, and the Ards, besides other more distant baronies ; so that, if this transplantation project had not been abandoned, the country around Belfast might have had an altered aspect. Some settlements and changes there were, but not affecting the established character of the inhabitants near the town.

<sup>3</sup> This is affirmed by Dr. Reid in his *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 198, note. It can scarcely apply now, as recent works have brought to light very much information on the subject in its civil, political, and military relations, and in the course of time will be altogether obviated. The documents which are in this country relating to the period are chiefly in Birmingham Tower, Dublin Castle ; and in the Record Office, and are accessible to literary inquirers.

element necessitated more extended correspondence. It was a very important Precinct, both in extent and the value of the country within its bounds. The Commissioners were generally resident in Carrickfergus, as being more secure, but a great number of communications are addressed to them at Belfast and replied to from this town. All affairs, sacred and secular, came under their cognisance. Very few examples are necessary here, and but as specimens of the many subjects to which the Commissioners were required to turn their attention. They are placed irregularly, not admitting or requiring successional dates.

When the scheme of the transplantation of the Scots was relinquished, it was still considered desirable, as there was a smouldering war in Scotland and so many disaffected at home, to keep a strict watch on the movements of both, and with this view a project was entertained of employing mounted troops to range along the coast of Antrim as a perpetual guard. When the nature of that coast was understood—rugged and almost destitute of roads—that plan for obtaining security was abandoned, and to check or regulate the intercourse by sea, as well in the interest of trade as for other purposes, seemed to the Commissioners the only feasible mode of procedure. Thus, while these matters were being debated, they write—

“These parts suffer very much by the closing of the ports in order to their trade with Scotland, which, we conceive, cannot with safety to your affairs here be opened until these things be brought to an issue one way or another.<sup>1</sup> The trade into England and along the coast is also exceedingly obstructed by some Pirates which lye upon these Harbours. . . . So that if your Honours do not speedily cause some swift vessell of good force to come into these parts to secure the Passage, trade will be at a stand. Riche’s vessell is now at Ayr, and if she were here she is too small to deal with these; and indeed if they have courage to set upon her, and have sail enough to reach her, she will be in hazard of taking.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This language refers to the scheme, then under consideration, of transplanting the inhabitants.

<sup>2</sup> Pirates, it is well known, were frequent on the Irish coast. In the document

One Bromfield<sup>1</sup> was discovered clipping and preparing to coin money in Belfast, and the Commissioners thereupon inquire how they were to deal with him and his "forging instruments." They also receive the following instructions regarding the Dispensary department here, doubtless from application on the subject, directing them how to proceed, and providing more liberal payment than professionals of the same class now receive, having regard to the lapse of more than 220 years.

In a letter to the Commissioners at Belfast, 22nd September, 1651, they are informed—

"If there be want of a Doctor and Apothecary amongst you and you can find fit and able persons for that purpose we leave to you the choice of them and the granting of their Salaries, only limiting you in this that you exceed not £100 yearly to the Doctor, nor £50 yearly to your Apothecary. We leave it to you to take a messenger and a doorkeeper for your own attendance, if you think both requisite, and to assign them salaries."

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from which these extracts are drawn, the Commissioners of Belfast mention a vessel which had been captured, and was *released by composition, licence being granted to do so*. Whether the pirates, in this instance, were of home or foreign growth is not expressed. The communication concludes with reminding those to whom it was addressed of what had been before recommended of establishing a "Pacquet Boat between these parts and Scotland."

<sup>1</sup> This Bromfield is somewhere stated to have been a spy. His punishment was imprisonment, and the surrender of his "forging instruments;" the fact being, perhaps, another instance of the advance which the Cromwellian Government had made in the amelioration of the criminal law, and which totally lost ground again, as is well known, in times thought to have been far more enlightened than the middle of the seventeenth century. A proof of this is opportunely afforded by the trial of another coiner, most likely also a practiser in Belfast, and the contrast which his fate offers to that of Bromfield is worth noting. It is the "Last speech, confession and dying words of J. Dunbar, who was Try'd and condemned for High Treason against his Majesty King George, at Carrickfergus, and executed for the same April 10th 1725." The high treason was coining, and the poor man testifies his contrition and thanks in the following manner:—"He thanks the Lord for inspiring the hearts and minds of those learned Gentlemen the Clergy of the Town of Belfast who were pleased to remember him in their public services joined with their Congregations on Sunday last," and concludes—"I die in the Presbyterian communion and upwards of fifty years of age."—*Abbreviated from the Pinkerton MSS.*



The local government took cognisance of clippers and coiners of money and doorkeepers in Belfast, up to ministers, which last engaged their particular attention. It was in 1654 they sent Mr. Dix to the North, when Belfast became his resting-place.

"It is ordered that Mr. William Dixe, Minister of y<sup>e</sup> Gospel [ ] convenient speed repaire unto y<sup>e</sup> Province of Ulster to Preach [ ] in such places there as Coll. Robert Barron and y<sup>e</sup> Com<sup>rs</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> Revenue [ ] with the Consent of y<sup>e</sup> said Mr. Dixe as they shall judge most Convenient for the advancement of y<sup>e</sup> same; and that for his paines and care therein he be allowed y<sup>e</sup> allowance of £120 per annum, the same to be paid him quarterly by the Treas<sup>r</sup> of the Publique Revenue at Carrickfergus or Belfast out of y<sup>e</sup> Moiety of tithes appointed for the maintenance of preaching Ministers and Schoole Masters, the first paym<sup>t</sup> to begin from y<sup>e</sup> first of May instant, and to Continue till further order. Dated at Dublin, 17 May, 1654."<sup>1</sup>

There was great difficulty in obtaining a sufficiency of money for the expenses of the Commissioners in Belfast Precinct. The Government had possession of the tithes and Bishops' lands, and the latter produced much less than might have been expected. A book in the Record Office informs us that "the Bishops' rents payable in the county of Antrim for half-a-year beginning 1st November, 1653, and ending 30th April, 1654, amount to £60 16s. 8d.;" and in another part of the same book, that the moiety of the ecclesiastical revenue of Down and Antrim was £88 7s. 6d. This did not go far in paying the ministers and schoolmasters, widows with children, and maimed soldiers, so that sums were often required from Dublin to meet the necessary expenses. Mention is made of so much as £1000 at one time having been sent, and the liberality of the Government was taxed beyond due proportion.

Thus the Privy Council write to the Commissioners respect-

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<sup>1</sup> *Order Book of Council*, p. 14. Communicated by W. M. Hennessy, Record Office.

ing Mr. Wyke, November 12, 1651, that he may have a piece of land, so that he can keep a horse and some cows, "as an encouragement to other ministers, and a provision for his family in case of death, and as a precedent for the future, so that all widows of godly painful ministers have a like accommodation."

Again, in August, 1654, they direct "the Commiss<sup>rs</sup> of Revenue at Belfast to assign and let out to Mr. Wyke, minister, a portion of the lands of Dromore, formerly the demesne of the late Bishop of Dromore, not exceeding one hundred acres, and to make a Lease thereof to him for the term of 7 years." Before this, namely, in 1652, Mr. Andrew Wyke got £200 to build a house, and a hundred acres for a dairy and to provide corn for his family.<sup>1</sup> Others were probably treated in the same manner.

The ecclesiastical entries are all interesting, but not sufficiently local to claim insertion.

"Paid Mr. Essex Digby a Quarter's Salary, £30." He was the episcopal minister of Belfast, as will be subsequently seen, on an equality, in the estimation of the Government, with Mr. Dix.

"20th April, 1654. Paid Mr. Jeromy O'Quinn in consideration of his paines in preaching the Gospel and towards defraying his charges to Dublin, £40."<sup>2</sup>

The Government was not liberal in some instances, directing their Commissioners in Belfast "not to suffer any of the Officers of the Scottish nation that have borne arms against the Parliament and refuse to subscribe the Engagement to live within their Quarters; and that none be permitted to be of "Jurys" but such as are willing to subscribe the Engagement; and that the persons who have been preyed upon by the Irish are not to be permitted to sue for reparation before they subscribe the Engagement."

In higher matters considerable liberality was shown, and very

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<sup>1</sup> From the *Pinkerton MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> For some original notices of Jerry O'Quinn and Wyke, and some other Cromwellian items, see Appendix No. 9.

easy compositions on estates in this neighbourhood were often effected. Cromwell personally was friendly in this respect to many, but his agents demurred at his intentions to General Monro. In regard to him, the Council acquainted the Commissioners at Belfast "that the Lord Protector having written to the Council in favour of Major-General Monro respecting the estate he claims in right of his wife sequestrated, they demand to know why and wherefore, that they may answer his Highness." They write on the same date (18th May, 1654) to General Monk, stating that they had received an order from Cromwell, "which order is of so public concernment, that albeit we are ready to give it all due observance, nevertheless having reasons to believe that it was obtained through undue suggestions, and assuring ourselves that your employment in Ulster and engagements against the Scotts, renders you capable of a fuller understanding of the demerits of the Major-General and of his actings against the Commonwealth's interest in Ireland, we desire you in order to public good to certify unto us your knowledge concerning the Major-General aforesaid, that we may be able to undeceive where it is likely his delinquency has been misrepresented, and so proceed farther thereupon as shall agree with public justice."

Monro, however, carried his point in spite of this opposition. He had married the widow of the first Viscount Ards, and his Cromwellian interest was serviceable to that family. He lived to an advanced age in the county of Down, near Comber, and on the Montgomery estates, and is every way favourably spoken of by his contemporaries.

All these are mere samples of the general public duties which the Commissioners in Belfast Precinct—the government almost of Ulster—had to discharge. They were very varied, and no doubt performed with vigilance and impartiality.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

BESIDES affairs of a more general nature, local matters must also have frequently called for the interference of the governmental authorities in Belfast, but it is singular what little notice is taken of them. There is one, however, of much interest. In 1651 the Commissioners were thus addressed:—

“Towards repairing the New Fort at Belfast. When we were last there we were informed that the first raiser and undertaker, by especial articles, were bound to keep the same repaired for some years to come, and we then gave a warrant to view the contract and look to the performance of it; nevertheless if the contract was drawn, and you think that there is a necessity of repairing it, we refer it to your care; and the excise or other public revenue must bear the charge. The gunners of Belfast may be continued in pay at 2s. per diem, reckoning four days to the week.”

This is here called the “new fort,” and was the building to which the following letters, some years subsequently, refer:—

“Upon the Petition of the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commonalty of Belfast concerning the Church and Church Yard there, now made a Fort;<sup>1</sup> whereby they are debarred the use of the same, and therefore desiring that the same be restored to them. And also upon

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<sup>1</sup> I heard from earliest days a tradition, and nothing more—so fleeting are facts of interest—that the church of Belfast had been converted into a fort by the Cromwellian Government, but never expected to see such certain confirmation of it as this. It was applied to military purposes for some years. The Market House, though at the time a poor building, seems also to have been adapted to a similar use, and there were three Courts of Guard, it is to be supposed, in different parts of the town. They were all probably but temporary barracks or lodgings for the soldiers. The term “Grand Fort” is quite different, and must mean a permanent and efficient place, of some size and strength, which the church no doubt was made.

a consideration had of another petition from the same persons touching their Town Hall and Market House in the same, which they allege to be detained from them, and made a Court of Guard, although the Petitioners have erected three Guards, besides the said Grand Fort and Market House. It is ordered that the Governours of Belfast for the time being do consider of their Petitions, and confer with the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commonalty touching the matter, and upon mature deliberation return unto this Board a Certificate of the true state of the whole case, and an opinion whether the Petitioners' desires may be granted with public security, and then such farther orders shall be made thereupon as shall be thought requisite.

“25 December, 1654.”

Further petitions were required before the desired object was obtained. On 15th August, 1655, the inhabitants still complain “that their Church on which they had expended great sums of money is still used as a Citadel, and pray that the Commonwealth would grant them money to build another.” This was referred also to the “Governors of Belfast,” to certify to the Board “if the Citadel could be removed without public prejudice, and if not, to decide where public meeting houses could be best built.”

At last, in February, 1656, “the Council having received a communication from Col. Cooper commanding at Belfast, and referring to the Petition from the Sovereign and Burgesses of that town, submitted all the papers to his Excellency Lord Henry Cromwell, Commander-in-Chief of his Highnesse's Forces in this nation, to act as he shall think meet in giving orders about ‘sleighting’ the Fort in Belfast, and restoring the Meeting Place to the inhabitants there.”

Immediately after (May, 1656) a grant was made of £10 for “sleighting” (demolishing) the fort at Belfast, and “bringing the guns and other provisions thence to the Castle of Carrickfergus.” The inhabitants lent assistance in this demolition, and had “the Meeting Place” restored to its original and sacred use.

But this did not end the history at this time of our old church, as the following order fully proves :—

"To Repaire the Publique Meeting Place att Belfast.

"H. CROMWELL.

"Ordered that Henry Markham Esq. doe out of y<sup>e</sup> Publique Monies that are or shall come into his hands arising out of Parochiall Tythes and Glebes issue forth and pay unto Mr. John Price, Rec<sup>r</sup> att Dublin, the sum of £100, the same being by him to be issued out for y<sup>e</sup> necessary Repaires of the Publique Meeting Place att Belfast which hath been much ruinated by being for some years past converted and made use of as a Citadell, the rest of y<sup>e</sup> charg<sup>e</sup> for y<sup>e</sup> repaire thereof being to bee made by an equall and indifferent Cesse by the Justices of the Peace according to Law : And, for y<sup>e</sup> said Henry Markham's paym<sup>t</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> said sum this with the said Mr. John Price's receipts shall bee a warrant.

"Councell Chamber, Dublin, 13th January, 1657."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>A</sup>  
<sub>25</sub> p. 39.

The substance of the work of the Commissioners was all like the preceding—occasional local gleams in the highest degree attractive, too few in number and too scanty in detail, mingled with long strict directions to watch the intercourse with Scotland, and the movements of the "old officers," many of whom resorted to Belfast. They are enjoined to consider well the "straits the poor soldiers are in," and what calamities might yet happen if reduced by the want of sufficient food and clothing.<sup>2</sup> They

<sup>1</sup> For these and many other Cromwellian papers, I have again to express my obligations to John P. Prendergast, Esq.

<sup>2</sup> "The pay of the forces for Ulster was £700 per month ; the revenue only bringing in £240 the balance of £460 was respited in the soldiers' pay till Cavan, Monaghan, and Tyrone be reduced and brought under contribution. In Ulster—Tyrone, Monaghan, Fermanagh, and Armagh, wholly waste, yielding no contribution or profit" (*Cromwellian Papers*). This is an extremely unfavourable view of three of the six forfeited counties alleged to have been settled by independent freeholders nearly half-a-century before. It may be exaggerated, but probably not to a great degree. Lands at the time, and even after the revolutionary wars, were of very little value, and no inducements existed to attract wealthy or respectable occupiers. But as everything was relative, the shilling or eightpence an acre may have been as difficult to obtain as twenty times the amount now, and £240 of revenue may represent a sum proportionably great. Though the paper does not express, with any precision, how far this collection reached, it preserves the broad fact, that four of the Ulster counties produced nothing whatever for soldiers, for revenue, or for any other branch of the public service. The Belfast Precinct had much to answer for to keep up appearances.



speak of delinquents, and of consideration to be observed towards widows and others in necessitous condition, and order threepence a-day out of the treasury to all poor prisoners, but particularly direct unceasing vigilance in collecting the revenue, suggesting means to be employed to coerce the Irish counties, as they denominate them, to pay their due share. For a general history of the country the *Cromwellian Papers* are invaluable, but long and patient search has to be made through them for a very small amount indeed of particular or local information.

All this soon ceased to be. Venables went to fight in other scenes;<sup>1</sup> Cromwell's power came to an end; and the rising sun was worshipped by many who in past days had obeyed the behests of the great Protector. The Restoration of 1660 was received here, as elsewhere in Ireland, with satisfaction, in the hope perhaps that there was at last to be an emergence from the contentions of so many years, and that a body of rulers was now about to arise who had learned wisdom by experience, and who were disposed to initiate, politically, religiously, and commercially, a liberal and rational system. If any were sanguine enough to look for such a consummation they were doomed to disappointment, and generations had yet to come and go before common sense and right reason were to be the guiding stars of kings and governments.

It was impossible that the Restoration<sup>2</sup> could bring peace at

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The four counties above mentioned were in this pauperised state, however, while outlaws overran the country, and no steady occupation was yet generally in much favour.

<sup>1</sup> One often wishes to know the after-fate or personal characteristics of those with whose names they have become familiar from their frequent recurrence. Robert Venables is one of those exciting such curiosity, but only the following note in Mr. Pinkerton's MSS. has been found regarding him:—"Colonel Robert Venables was the author of a work, published in 1661, entitled *The Experienced Angler; or, Angling Improved*, to which Izaak Walton prefixed a prose address to his ingenious friend the author. In this work Venables speaks of having fished in the Blackwater by Charlemont, the Broadwater by Shane's Castle, at Mountjoy, Antrim, and Toome."

<sup>2</sup> Only four persons in Belfast formally claimed the benefit of the general pardon issued from Breda by Charles the Second. These were John Leathes, Roger Humphreys, William Dix, and Robert Leathes. The last of these was Town Clerk at the time.

once. The country contained many discontented persons; the claims to the land of old owners and new possessors—hopes unfulfilled and fears too amply realised—caused for years a perpetual commotion. Religious differences were as broadly marked and as productive of animosity as before; the High Church was triumphant, and arose from the lowest depths to entire supremacy. What is known in history as Blood's plot—which, if successful, might have revived the civil wars—was one of the first outbursts which appeared. The north of Ireland is supposed to have been most implicated in this plot, in which some Presbyterian ministers were concerned; but though a singular, and even as yet not a thoroughly understood conspiracy, its effect here was practically unfelt.

Two members were chosen to represent the town in the first Parliament of Charles the Second,<sup>1</sup> and Belfast proceeded on its industrious career, so well as state trammels permitted, and undisturbed again by war, till the era of the Revolution.

During this considerable period of quietude materials are not to be found to constitute any general history of the town. Of the more public events of the period one of the most important was the presence of the Duke of Ormond in Belfast in 1666, the same famous personage who had guided for the King the great civil wars, now elevated to the highest dignity of the peerage. The cause of his visit was to quell a mutiny of a portion of the garrison of Carrickfergus;<sup>2</sup> and his belief of the dangerous state of many in this locality is manifest from his letter to Lord Arlington. He says—

“Though I find the mutineers somewhat slackened in their courage, yet lest they may have had other encouragements than yet appear to

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<sup>1</sup> One of these was William Knight, after whose name it has hitherto been customary to write *In Legibus eruditus*, but in the *Rawdon Papers* (p. 200) he is called Colonel Knight. He was probably both a lawyer and an officer. The other member was Henry Davies, son of John Davies of Carrickfergus.

<sup>2</sup> The history of this event, and its results, are fully disclosed in M'Skimin's *History of Carrickfergus*, p. 62, to which place it has, of course, more relation than to Belfast.

persevere in their mutiny, I am resolved to-morrow morning to go myself to prevent further progress of it, and I shall make the greater haste to come there for fear my Lord of Donegall should proceed to give them those assurances of pardon which I perceive he is enough inclined to do, and consequently prevent my intention of bringing the ringleaders to condign punishment for so great and unseasonable an insolence. And though the mutiny of four companies may seem to be of too little importance to draw me from hence, yet considering their neighbourhood with the most disaffected part of Scotland, and the ill inclination of too many in the province of Ulster, I think it safer to hazard the making of a Journey that might have been spared than to be wanting in case it should prove otherwise.”<sup>1</sup>

The apprehension of Ormond as to “the ill inclination of too many in the province of Ulster” was not unfounded. The mutiny which disturbed his repose in Dublin was duly suppressed, and was unconnected with any religious or political measures affecting the general population. The correspondence to which this hurried journey of the Lord Lieutenant gave rise contains descriptions of his reception by Chichesters, Hills, Rawdons, and others in his passage through the country, and relates how, on the third day after his departure from Dublin, he arrived at Dromore, where he was received with much pomp and rejoicing, the pleasant 100 acres of the *démesne* being, it is certain, no longer contaminated with the presence of Mr. Wyke; how, on Monday morning, he passed through Lisburn to dinner to Belfast, whither he was followed by many persons of distinction; and that evening the Earl of Arran came up to this town from Carrickfergus, and gave his Grace an account of the mutiny. These are chiefly general historical matters, which can be only mentioned; and if no public details applicable to the town can be procured, some materials are accessible of the more private affairs of the Earl of Donegall, who then resided here, from a family roll of most formidable dimensions, deposited in the Public Record Office in Dublin. The accounts contained in this document, extending over the two years (1665 and 1666), were kept by

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<sup>1</sup> The *Pinkerton MSS.*

the steward in the most minute manner; and though some parts cannot be deciphered, the bulk is plain, forming a complete example of the expenditure of the establishment of an Irish nobleman in the seventeenth century. Joymount, or Carrickfergus, and Belfast transactions are both included. The family of the Earl passed from the one to the other as inclination or pleasure induced them, but Belfast occupies the larger portion of the recitals. It is not possible to make many quotations, but some, of varying character, calculated to show the nature of this great roll, have been selected from the heap. A fertile imagination might draw from the entire almost the Belfast domestic history of the time, or at least seize some points in the daily life of the occupant of the Castle, his connections and subordinates, sufficient to form a groundwork for his picture.

The Earl of Donegall farmed on a considerable scale. Lands at Woodbourne, near Carrickfergus, on the one side, and Stranmillis, near Belfast, on the other, are both noticed as being cultivated directly, and their produce brought into the stackyards of the respective castles. The New Park, extending down from the Cave Hill to what is now called Parkmount, at the seaside, was also on hand. As a park it was, in 1666, but in process of formation. His lordship had also the Old Park, still so called likewise what is meant, under an abbreviated title, for the Squire's Hill, and what is more fully expressed—the Black Mountain—all being stocked with sheep and cattle. The result of this is that a vast proportion of the roll is for wages to the numerous persons employed in labour both in these more distant lands and on the gardens surrounding the Castle of Belfast, and the cultivated grounds and meadows outside of them, which the town has since entirely covered. The disproportion between wages in 1666 and this present year; the similarity of many terms and usages in agricultural labour and otherwise; the little dropping notices here and there interspersed, which show the features of an age so different from our own, are all noteworthy. The sheets of the roll on being put together have not been retained in the order in which they were originally written, and

even if not so defective, no part could probably be chosen distinctly suitable to this work as a narrative. There are a few of some length detailing the particulars of visits made by Lord and Lady Donegall in 1666 to Dublin, or to those of their own rank residing in this neighbourhood. Dromore, Hillsborough, the Marquis of Antrim, and many other places and individuals are brought before us, and are every way interesting. A few quotations relating to home matters are more to the purpose, and are here inserted without regard to regularity.

“July 28th, 1666. Paid Labourers for carrying things to Carrickfergus, my Lady and family being there.”

A few days after another entry expresses—

“Paid Labourers for ten days carrying Provisions and other things to Carrickfergus.”

These entries, in their broad meaning, would imply that men were employed for ten days carrying “provisions and other things” between Belfast and Joymount. It may be an obscure mode of expression, the understanding being that the backs of horses—not wheeled vehicles—bore the burdens. Belfast, as supplying to so much extent the provision contingent, may reasonably be supposed to have been the more important of the two residences.

1666. “Payment made for cutting Passages through Crummuck Wood.”

“Paid for cutting and binding 4000 Faggots in Crummuck Wood, at 22 pence per hundred.”

“Paid Mr. Morton for a new Perriwigge for my Lord, and mending two old ones, £3 10s. 0d.”

My lord was the first Earl, and he appears in a huge periwig in the picture representing him in the Appendix in this work.

“Paid for 16 yards of mattin for my Lord’s and Lady’s seat in Belfast Church, at 2d. per yard, by my Lady’s appointment, 2s. 8d.

“Paid Thomas the Footman for three days’ running with my Lord from Dublin.”

This was the running-footman who ran alongside my lord's coach—a three days' race from Dublin to Belfast.

1666. "Paid for a pound of Almonds bought by my Lady's order in Dublin."

"Paid for the Carriage of my Lord's Clock and Chimes from Dublin, 18s."

"Paid for a Grammar for Mr. Charles Chichester."

Charles Chichester was nephew of the Earl, being one of the sons of his youngest brother Edward. There is no other of the name and period noticed in Lodge's *Peerage*, though, if that work be correct, this youth was, at the time when a grammar was purchased for him, about eighteen years of age. At any rate he was a resident, and a near relation of the family, and many odd entries regarding him are in the roll, such as—

"Paid for Mr. Charles Chichester's summer suit, 7s. 1½d."<sup>1</sup>

"Paid Mr. Sampson Thaker for Mr. Charles Chichester's Diett, Schooling, Cloaths, and other things for one year, £16 15s. 4d."

"Paid Mr. Haslon the Schoolmaster at Lisnegarvie for Mr. Charles Chichester's Learning, £1 5s. 0d."

"Paid Mr. Clugston for Mr. John Chichester's Cloathes, £6."

John Chichester, for whose benefit this liberal donation was made, was also, it is most probable, a nephew of Lord Donegall.

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<sup>1</sup> This seems to be a very moderate sum, at least as demands of the same kind go now, for an entire suit of clothes for Mr. Charles Chichester. The Earl of Donegall was perhaps not in very affluent circumstances at this time, the long rebellion causing a neglect and waste of property not to be remedied all at once. This is rather proved by the bequests appropriated by his trustees to his grandchildren, which are also curious on another account, as proof of what was sufficient or perhaps obtainable for the maintenance and education of ladies of high rank—"£1000 to be paid, equally divided, between Gertrude and Mary St. Leger one year after marriage, the said Trustees to raise £40 apiece yearly to these Ladies previous to marriage for maintenance and education." In connection with this it will be remembered that this the first Earl of Donegall left only two daughters: the elder one, Mary, was married to John St. Leger, and was mother of the Earl's two grand-daughters; the younger was the Lady Anne often mentioned under that name as taking part in the affairs of Belfast. She was married twice, ultimately becoming Countess of Longford, but had no children.



1666. "Paid John Bell for 100 Loades of Turff, £1. 10s. 0d."

"Paid Roland Oliver for making Boots, Shoes, and Golloshees for my Lord, £1 1s. 0d."

"Paid for my Lord's Perriwig mending, 4s."

"Given to a Footeman to buy Broages, by my Lord's order, 1s."

"Paid for a Pound of Tobacco, 2s.; for a Bottle of Sack, 3s.; and for a Bound Almanick for my Lord, 1s."

"Paid for a Paire of Pumpes for the running Footeman to Carrickfergus, 1s."

"Paid Mr. M'Cullough the Goldsmith for work done for my Lord, and for making my Lord a Musterd Pott, £1 2s. 0d."

There was thus a goldsmith in the town in 1666.

"Paid for two Pounds of Sugar to preserve Two Pounds of Damsons sent to my Lady to Dublin."

The price of the sugar which preserved this choice present of Belfast fruit sent to Dublin for her ladyship's enjoyment is quite illegible.

"Given to Mrs. Pegg's maid that brought a present of two Fat Capons, 6 pence."

"Given to Mr. Charles Chichester Five Shillings by my Lord's order as an allowance to buy himself Gloaves, Shoo Fringes, and other Necessaries."

"Paid Captain Leathes that he disbursed for Three Pair of Snuffers and Extinguishers."

These articles are not so modern as some may suppose.

"Sent to my Lord per Mr. Gould the Buttlr, 5s. Given to my Lord himself the same day, 5s. And 'Paid for crying a Stray Horse in the Market.'"

"Paid for 3 ounces of Onion Seed and one of Lettis Seed, 4s. 4d."

"Paid for gathering Apples in the Gardens and making Sider."

Matters the most trifling as well as the most important are in this roll. The steward pays threepence for pepper for a sick calf, and sixpence for releasing my lord's cattle out of the pound,

showing that his live stock had to submit to the same rates and usages as those of the rude tillers of the soil; he also pays—

1666. “Izrall Christian and Wm. Thompson for themselves and horses Charges being out at y<sup>e</sup> 6 Mile Water three days and two nights to gather mony of the Tennents, I being going for Dublin was forced to use all means to hasten in money.”

Likewise to

“Mr. Thomas Porringer (*sic*) towards a Bond of £100 due by my Lord to Mr. Doake, and assigned to y<sup>e</sup> said Mr. Porringer y<sup>e</sup> summe of £40 endorsed upon y<sup>e</sup> said Bonde, my Lord ordering the payment thereof in several Gallies.”

“Paid Mr. Bryan for two years’ salary, £80.”

This was the chaplain.

“Paid John Cleeve for casting the Leaded weights of my Lord’s Great Clocke, 4s. 2d.”

“Paid the Plumber for labourers 12 days attending him on the Leads, 7s. 6d.”

This was on the summit of the Castle of Belfast.

“Paid David Dowey for Coopradge, and for the Brew House and sellers before my Lady came home.”

“Paid Mr. M’Cullough for making Silver Buckles for my Lord, 15s.”

Such are a few imperfect glimpses of the Earl of Donegall and his household in the seventeenth century in their every-day lives and employments. The companion and friend of the Duke of Ormond had settled down to very ordinary pursuits. The agricultural notices in the roll are unlimited, and of most of them he must have been fully cognisant: there are also references to military affairs, but more to the sports and pastimes of the day. My lord participated in the horse-races of the period, which appear to have been at Lambeg; he had his “faulkner,” who is frequently mentioned as drawing hawks at Islandmagee; and hounds, spaniels, and deer for his pleasure and recreation. Some few other extracts from this vast roll will elsewhere appear as applicable to particular points.

From 1671 till 1674 projects to remodel the Irish corporations were entertained. Difficulties were found to attend this scheme, and Belfast came in for notice in the discussions which it caused, and which show that it was beginning to be recognised as a place of some consideration. The Lord Lieutenant, in a letter to Mr. Secretary Coventry, says<sup>1</sup>—"There is one thing more relating to this matter . . . that the trade and condition of some of the towns here being now very much altered from what they were at the time of granting their former charters, as particularly Belfast. . . ." and he goes on to say that unless empowered by the King he is not competent of himself to enlarge the privileges of it and others, the trade of which had increased. The new privileges claimed by Belfast were not very extensive, but show in some of the provisions asked for an anticipation of modern times. The propositions in 1671 were—

"That the Charter be renewed with augmentation of Privileges.

"That the style of Sovereign and Burgesses be changed to Mayor and Aldermen, with a Common Council consisting of 24 Burgesses.

"That the Right Hon. the Earl of Donegall be preserved in all his Privileges and Liberties, as formerly in the Charter.

"That the Bye Laws, Acts, and Ordinances of the Corporation, with the Consent of the Lord of the Castle, be only made by the Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council."

This seems to abolish the voice of the Commonalty.

"That the Court of Record held for the Borough have the power to try actions of £50 Sterling.

"That they may have Quarter Sessions or Assemblys with Grand Juries, to inquire into, present, and correct all Misdemeanours and Trespasses whatsoever committed and done in the Corporation, and to mend and correct all faults and breaks in bridges, streets, lanes, highways, houses and water courses in the said borough, by fine or other punishment.

"That all through Toll Customs of the Gates, and neats' tongues be continued as formerly.

"That the precincts, liberties, and limits of the Borough and Cor-

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<sup>1</sup> Capel's *Letters*, p. 25, January, 1674-5.

poration of Belfast, as formerly, extend itself three miles distant on every side of the Town by a straight line, with power to set up marks in any convenient places upon the Mears thereof.

“That the Mayor for the time being be a Justice of the Peace for the County of Antrim and the County of Down.”

They also propose the repairing of the “Common Kea,” pleading, in very marked language, the entire poverty of the Corporation, which was not a new complaint; that they had no town stock or purse to make improvements, nor any maintenance arising or growing due out of the town to meet the most ordinary demands. They were becoming alive to their wants, but suggest no method of supplying them, except the command of the wharfage, quayage, and crannage “from all foreign ships.” No report is made by them of the income likely to be derived in the year 1671 from these sources.

There is some advance in all this, if not to the extent of popular freedom, at least in that of municipal dignity. The provisions of the old charter were now thought to be too narrow, and this proposal for amendment proves a desire for definite and enlarged privileges. At the same time, it must be said that the Commonalty, by the original charter, can be taken no otherwise than as members of the corporate body, inasmuch as they were represented, or intended to be represented, by a jury from among themselves to make assessments on the whole inhabitants in conjunction with the Sovereign and Burgesses. But abuses had crept in; privileges granted in 1613 were dormant; the proposal for amendment was set aside—it was too soon for a Mayor and Aldermen—and the existing rule by a Sovereign and a few Burgesses continued to the end exclusive, and destitute of any popular element.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The position of the old Corporation is excellently shown in the *Report of the Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in Ireland* (1833–34). The subject might have been greatly enlarged on above, but it is devoid of interest to most readers. The Covenanters had made an unsuccessful attempt nearly thirty years before to amend the Corporation, and this was another somewhat similar. This disposition to remodel the Irish corporations did not cease, though it is not possible to see, in the moderate plan propounded in 1671 for Belfast, the germ of

A short time after these matters were under discussion, Arthur, first Earl of Donegall, died in Belfast (16th March, 1675), and was buried with great ceremony in Carrickfergus.<sup>1</sup>

The entire dearth of facts or events that could properly be incorporated with this history will cause many years to be passed over unregarded. Close search through masses of documents in public offices might rescue from long darkness a few notices more suggestive than direct, more particular to individuals than partaking of the general application in which the town as a whole community had mutual interest. It does not much concern the public to know now that the Lord Lieutenant and Council in November, 1679, write to the Sovereign and Burgesses of Belfast about a Mr. Anthony Bourke who was arrested, saying, "that *nothing material appears against him, he having become a convert to our Church*;" that George M'Cartney, the most important person then in Belfast, is so far rebuked from Dublin as to be told not to trouble himself about arms, "that not being a Merchant's business," or that Friar Paul O'Neill, considering how long Belfast is like to be without shipping bound for Flanders or other foreign place, except Norway, is permitted by the Lord Lieutenant and Council, if he give security for shipping himself at any other port, that he have liberty to do so.<sup>2</sup> Yet such immaterial notes would comprise much of all that it is possible to collect applicable to the general subject during the latter years of the reign of Charles the Second.

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encroachments on popular liberty which the two last Stuart kings are accused of meditating throughout their respective reigns, but which certainly took shape here afterwards in the case of James the Second.

<sup>1</sup> For an account of this funeral, a copy of the will of the first Earl of Donegall, and also the copy of his picture, see Appendix No. 10.

<sup>2</sup> These three items are extracted from the *Pinkerton MSS.*

## CHAPTER IX.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

THE accession of James the Second took place on the 6th of February, 1685, and one of the earliest congratulatory addresses the new monarch received was that from Belfast, couched in the following adulatory terms:—

“To the King’s Most Excellent Majesty.

“May it please your most Sacred Majesty, We, your Majesty’s most humble and loyal subjects, the Sovereign, Burgesses, Grand Jury, and Inhabitants of your Corporation of Belfast in the Kingdom of Ireland, were put under great consternation and grief of heart by the sad news of the death of your Majesty’s most dear brother and our late dread and gracious Sovereign Lord, until by the happy and rightful succession of your most sacred Majesty to the Throne we were revived and by your Majesty’s most gracious declaration made to rejoice in the Government which we do hereby recognise, and prostrate ourselves at your Majesty’s sacred feet as becomes your faithful and obedient subjects praying your gracious protection. And as we stand bound by duty, allegiance, and the gratitude we owe to your gracious condescensions, do promise and assure your Majesty of our obedience to your Government and commands. And that we will be ready with our lives and fortunes to serve you against all enemies foreign or domestic that shall presume to disturb your Majesty’s peaceable and happy Reign. Beseeching your Majesty to accept this humble tender of our duty in the simplicity of its address we shall always pray for your Majesty’s long and happy reign over us.

“JOHN HAMILTON, *Sovereign.*”<sup>1</sup>

This address was signed by the Protestant vicar of Belfast, Claudius Gilbert, the burgesses, and 126 inhabitants, and is dated 27th March, 1685. But it, and many like it, could not

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<sup>1</sup> From the *Pinkerton MSS.*, the reference being Addresses, A. 106, Bermingham Tower, Dublin Castle.



influence coming events. The Earl of Clarendon, brother-in-law of the King, had been appointed Lord Lieutenant, but was soon displaced for Richard Talbot, the future Duke of Tyrconnel, already, it was commonly said, unfavourably known to the Protestant party in Ireland for his enmity to them, and his inclination to further the supposed intentions of the King. As the foundation of greater changes, one of the first was directed to the abolition of the existing corporations in Ireland, and the establishment of others more likely to assist James and his Lieutenant in their aggressions on the settlement of the country. The charter of Belfast was subjected with others to this process of dismemberment, and though the individuals who composed it expressed an intention of defending their rights by every means within the compass of the law, they were overborne by those who for the time were in possession of power. So early as 14th May, 1687, it is written that "the Corporation learn from their Solicitor Mr. Martin in Dublin that the Town is in hazard of Judgement for not sending their original Patent to be shown to the Attorney General as a Voucher to their Plea filed; Resolved that the Charter be forthwith sent express to Mr. Martin."<sup>1</sup> This may be deemed the final surrender. Before the new charter was issued the corporate body continued to exercise their power, but under dissatisfaction at the impending changes. The troops of the King were stationed in Belfast—a portion of the general army remodelled—in view of expected events; and it is related, that "complaint was made to his Excellency by the Roman Catholic officers garrisoned in Belfast that there is no convenient or fit place for their hearing Mass or divine service on Sundays and Holy Days, but an old ruinous house." The Bishop of Clogher, Tyrconnel's secretary, thereupon writes to the Corporation, though they were expecting every day to be disembodied, and to be in no capacity either to grant or refuse applications made to them—

"That his Excellency taking the complaint of the Officers into

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

consideration directs me to desire and require you to let the said officers and Soldiers make use of either the Town House or School House, or some other decent and fit place for the said Divine Service, as in all other Corporations of the Kingdom the Magistrates do freely allow, and as is expected you will likewise do, and not doubting of your compliance.

“I am your humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

“PATRICK CLOGHER, *Secret.*<sup>1</sup>

“To the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen,  
and Burgesses of the Town of Belfast.”

This letter produced a rejoinder, not from mayor and sheriffs, as the Bishop erroneously designated the still governing body in the town, but under their old title, and it was nearly one of their last acts, till restored again, at no very distant day, to their original station.

“Belfast, Sept<sup>r</sup> 12th, 1688.

“SIR,

“I have communicated yours of the 7th inst. to my brethren the Burgesses of this Corporation; we have considered the contents thereof, and are heartily sorry that his Excellency should desire of us what is not in our power to grant. As for the School, it being of the foundation and free gift of the Lord Donegall deceased, and now repaired and supported by his heirs, it were presumption in us to dispose of what we have only a common interest with all others his Majesty's subjects. And for the Town House it being the only place purchased and set apart by the Lord and inhabitants of the Manor and Corporation of Belfast for Keeping Courts, holding of Sessions, and frequent meetings of the Sovereign and Burgesses for regulating and despatching the affairs of the Corporation, we cannot (without great injury to the town, and depriving ourselves of those conveniences necessary for us to provide for) comply with what his Excellency desires of us; we doubt not but the Officers and Soldiers you speak of, may, if they please, meet with a conveniency in town, but the poverty of our Corporation, and uncertainty of its continuance is such—no revenue, lands, tenements, or salary belonging to it—seems a little hard to expect that the charge of such provision should be laid wholly on the Sovereign and Burgesses, especially now enjoying the liberties of our Charter only *ex gratis*. Since our circumstances

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

are such we hope, Sir, you will become our advocate to his Excellency to assure him what is really true, that our noncompliance proceeds not from any peevish perverse humour, but only want of ability and opportunity to gratify his Expectations whose Commands shall always be observed to the utmost of our power.

“Your most humble Servant

“ROBERT LEATHES.

“To the Bishop of Clogher.”<sup>1</sup>

The expiring Corporation made good on this occasion the refusal to appropriate either of the buildings mentioned to ecclesiastical purposes. The Bishop's request was expressed in moderate and becoming terms, and the correspondence is rather in confirmation of that considerate treatment dispensed to Belfast by the Roman Catholic party at the Revolution. The new charter became the law of the town on the 16th October, 1688.<sup>2</sup> It increased the number of burgesses to thirty-five, the majority of whom were strangers, not acquainted with the town or knowing anything of its requirements. Seventeen of the number have been always reported as Presbyterians, though it might now be impossible to establish the fact. The new Sovereign, Thomas Pottinger, was undoubtedly of that denomination, and was the only one of the entire who took any part in the affairs of the town, perhaps from just or praiseworthy motives, when the public were without due guidance, and disturbed by the commotions prevailing around them. This enlarged Corporation, being destitute of cohesion or unanimity, never acted in its corporate capacity; no acts done by it appear in the Corporate Records—not even the names of those who composed it.<sup>3</sup> Most of the regulations of the former charter were continued, but the clause embodied in the new one empowering the chief governor and Privy Council to remove at

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

<sup>2</sup> *Rot. Pat.* 4 Jac. II., p. 3. 21.

<sup>3</sup> For the names of the thirty-five burgesses of King James's Corporation, and some observations concerning a few of them, a list of the names of all the Sovereigns of Belfast from 1613 to 1800, and also those of all the Members of Parliament for the town for the same period, see Appendix No. 11.

discretion the Sovereign, burgesses, or any officer whatever, was the blemish which made it worthless—at variance with local self-government, with all popular freedom, and general advancement. It existed only from October, 1688, till August, 1689.

A very short time after the introduction of this enlarged corporate jurisdiction here, the Prince of Orange landed in England. The momentous contest at Derry had begun, and the principal persons in Belfast and the parts of the country adjoining formed an Association for their own defence. They believed that they had been deceived by Tyrconnel, who was gradually increasing his army in the interest of the King, then in France. A contemporary pamphlet<sup>1</sup> enters with some minuteness into the history of the country during the interval between October, 1688, and the arrival of Schomberg's army. This is the account given in it of the failure of a design to acquire possession of Belfast:—

“When the Project of disarming the Popish soldiers in that Town (Belfast) was upon Execution Sir W—— F—— Mr. V—— and Mr. H——ton of T——, together with Capt. Leighton, Capt. Bermingham, Lieut. Barnes, Lieut. Tubman, and several other Officers of the Regiment and Citizens of the Town met in order to accomplish their Designs ; but the first three, relenting, absolutely deni'd to go on, though often pressed to it by the Officers, Captn. Leighton urging the Feasibleness of it by engaging to disarm the whole Garison with the assistance only of as many men as might serve to bring off their Arms : but the three first Gentlemen discountenancing the Captain's offer, and interposing their great authority with the Town, the whole project fell, and H——ton of T—— Galloped towards Sir Arthur Rawdon, who, marching with 500 men to make good the Attempt, was advanced within Five Miles of the Town. . . . Their correspondence at Bellfast assuring them of a failure by the Undertakers of that Town

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<sup>1</sup> The full title of this pamphlet is *A Faithful History of the Northern Affairs of Ireland from the late King James's Accession to the Crown to the Siege of Londonderry, giving a true account of the Miscarriages there, and of the Reasons why the Gentry abandoned these Partes.* This pamphlet is considered one-sided, like everything else almost that treats of Irish history, but its character in that respect does not come under notice here. It is rather well known, and has been the subject of comment on many occasions.

made them dread the Consequences of being solely exposed to the Revenge of the Government, which consideration put them upon returning those arms they had taken."

The circumstances are related in terms nearly identical in works of higher pretensions than the pamphlet quoted from.<sup>1</sup>

The names of the inhabitants who took part in this affair are not mentioned, the pamphlet merely stating that "the Gentlemen of Belfast had not early Notice enough to be in a Readiness, and urged the postponing of it, till Measures could be more fully Concerted."

The initiation of the project just related, and which ended so badly, was on the 4th of January, 1689. Those concerned in it and "the Protestant Nobility and Gentry foresaw that such

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<sup>1</sup> Among others the *Life of William the Third*, by Walter Harris, vol. ii., p. 230. The only conspicuous Belfast man who took part in these transactions, and whose name is unnecessarily veiled under the initials Sir W— F—, was Sir William Franklin. The *Narrative of Northern Transactions* represents him in rather unfavourable colours, and he was, it is likely, the main obstacle in obstructing the attempt here narrated in Belfast. The two who concurred with him, also described by initials only, were Mr. Upton and Mr. Hamilton of Tullymore, though their influence in the town must have been small compared with that of Sir William Franklin. He was husband of the Countess of Donegall, widow of the first Earl, and with whom he had lived in the Castle for some years in great magnificence. On the first outbreak in the revolutionary wars he had command of a regiment, but his military ardour being perhaps not very great, he had expressed an intention of going to England. The pamphlet is the authority for stating that "this design coming to the knowledge of his soldiers they forced him to remain."

The writer examined the will of Sir William Franklin, which is in the Record Office in Dublin, in the hope, from his position and the transactions in which he was concerned, that it might contain some allusion to his residence in Belfast, or some reference to the town itself, its size or its inhabitants, at the time of the Revolution, but like most similar documents it is entirely destitute of any such information. It was made at Maverne, in Bedfordshire, in 1691, and contains but two trifling allusions in evidence of his connection with Belfast: they are—

"Also I give to my dearly beloved wife the Countess of Donegall the furniture of any one Roome either in my House in London or at Thurleigh, which she shall choose, as a Token of my respect to her, she being otherwise provided for by her own Estate, much better than she can be supply'd by mine, under the circumstances it now stands."

"Also I give to the said Countess of Donegall the ovall Picture of the late Lord Donegall her late Husband."

Proceedings would incense the Government and draw down an Army on them, so soon as Tyrconnel could be ready with his new Levies.”<sup>1</sup> They were alarmed at the constantly increasing numbers of his army, “when the King was retired”—that is, had abdicated, as they considered—and they proceeded to organise their own forces, appointing commanders for each county, and directed that a General Council of the entire Association should be held at Hillsborough to deliberate and be prepared for immediate action. “The first thing resolved on was a necessary Provision of Money, and several Methods were proposed for the raising of it; as first, by calling a private Sessions, in which they might charge the country, under a pretence of finishing the Bridge begun at Belfast; but this was condemned as inconvenient. Then it was moved that Money should be advanced upon the public Faith, but that was feared to have been almost Bankrupt. It was afterwards proposed that the Revenue might be confiscated, but this was not agreed to till the Collections were all drawn off, so that the only Method concluded on was by voluntary Contributions either in Money or Goods, as might best suit the Gentlemen’s Convenience; and it was ordered for the better Collection and Disposal of them that Mr. Hamilton of Bangor should be Receiver, and Mr. H—ton of T—— disposer. The Gentlemen of the Countrey and Merchants of Belfast having subscribed to such Sums as they were able or willing to advance, copies of their Subscriptions were dispersed into the several Counties, and proposed as an example to induce others to contribute.”<sup>2</sup> It would be worth knowing what sums the Belfast merchants subscribed on this occasion, but the document is silent on that head.

It may be taken for granted that while all these events were in agitation, principally in Belfast, as the centre of operations, Thomas Pottinger and the newly-made Corporation over which he presided were rather disregarded. The Association, uncontrolled either by corporate or governmental authority, despatched

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<sup>1</sup> Harris’s *Life of King William*, vol. ii., p. 231.

<sup>2</sup> *Faithful History of the Northern Affairs of Ireland, &c.*



Captain Leighton from Belfast on the 10th of January with an Address to the Prince of Orange, and on the 10th of February an answer was returned approving of all their proceedings, with commissions for the officers of the regiments lately raised, and promises of speedy succour.

The Association now having a considerable force at their command in Belfast, James's forces having left the town a short time before, resolved to make an effort to obtain Carrickfergus, which, in the possession of the Irish army, acted as a restraint on their movements. On the 21st February, 1689, a body of 1000 men, under the command of Colonel Bermingham and Major Baker, marched from this town for that purpose. This was also an unsuccessful exploit, indicating unpreparedness and defective organisation on the side of the Association. The small army commanded by Bermingham was too tardy in its progress. On its arrival at Carrickfergus, Mark Talbot, Lieutenant-Colonel to the Earl of Antrim, desired to know the meaning of their coming. " . . . He was told that they came to demand the place for the Prince of Orange, to check the insolencies and robberies of the soldiers, and to put the Town and Castle, and the Stores contained in them, under the command of a Protestant governor."<sup>1</sup> A parley ensued, not attended however with satisfactory results, as its effect was to make Tyrconnel acquainted with the true state of the Protestant army around Belfast: "that they were untrained, had few experienced Officers, the most part of them without Arms, and such as they had were unfit for service; that they were much scattered, and their numbers not near what had been written, and was confidently reported in Dublin; and that they wanted all Ammunition and necessary Provisions for appearing in the Field. Tyrconnel, who had for twenty days deferred sending down his Army, after it had been agreed on in Council in Dublin, resolved, upon this Information, to despatch the most considerable and best trained Part of it, under the command of Lieutenant-General Hamilton, an experienced

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<sup>1</sup> Harris's *Life of King William*, vol. ii., p. 233.

officer.”<sup>1</sup> The supporters of the expected king certainly did not exhibit that alacrity and good management which are essential to success, but amidst these discouraging circumstances Captain Leighton returned from his “honourable errand,” and announced to the Association that cannon and ammunition were shipped for their relief, and a great army ready to embark. This was on the 9th March, and immediately King William and Queen Mary were proclaimed in Belfast and in all the towns in the north-east parts of Ulster. According to authentic statements their congratulations were premature, for only two days after, General Hamilton’s army arrived in the north of Ireland, defeated in all places the ill-ordered levies of the Protestant commanders, and seized at Hillsborough the provisions, ammunition, and papers of the Council collected at that town.<sup>2</sup> A considerable body retreated to Coleraine; many fled to England, some took Protections from the Irish, and others found shelter in Belfast, which, on the approach of Hamilton’s army, at once surrendered to him.<sup>3</sup> James had himself arrived at Kinsale from France on the 12th of March, in the hope of recovering his lost greatness by the assistance of his Irish subjects. His prospects at the moment were good. “The enemy,” says a narrator, “became absolute masters of the whole country without the expence of many drops of blood, for the Counties of Down and Antrim being the only Inlets to the Northern Province, we may very well date the loss of Ulster<sup>4</sup> (at that time the only

<sup>1</sup> Harris’s *Life of King William the Third*, vol. ii., p. 234. <sup>2</sup> *Ibid*, p. 235.

<sup>3</sup> Six companies of Cormack O’Neill’s regiment were immediately stationed in the town, and a troop of dragoons in Malone and the Falls. They formed part of the force (Harris, vol. ii., p. 231) which in April of this year (1689) proceeded, under the command of Colonel Talbot, to attack Henry Hunter, who had collected a considerable body of troops near Killileagh, in the county of Down, to defend themselves from the oppressions and robberies of the Irish soldiers. This outbreak is an episode of the revolutionary war. It was suppressed, and Hunter escaped, but not till a considerable force had been sent against him. For rather a full account of Hunter and his brave exploits, see Graham’s *Ireland Preserved*, pp. 361–365.

<sup>4</sup> The northern towns were thrown into excessive alarm by the approach of Hamilton’s army. It was chiefly now so many of the inhabitants of Belfast and other places fled from the coming storm. An humble petition from Bangor pro-

remaining terror to the Irish) from the evil success that followed the Counsels of the Country." But Ulster was not lost with Belfast. Derry was still unsubdued; and men were there with arms in their hands contending, with zeal and courage unexampled, for their religious and political rights.

The extent to which Belfast was secured from outrage by submission to King James at this period has been the subject of some discussion. It is preserved, but by tradition only, that Thomas Pottinger stood at the foot of Bridge Street, when the Roman Catholic army was passing to their quarters at Carrickfergus, to exert his authority in preserving order, and that on all occasions, in his capacity of chief magistrate, his endeavours were directed to the safety of the town and its remaining inhabitants. Though some pillage and disorder must have occurred, it is probable that the protection granted by the Government was, with Pottinger's assistance, effectual. The sentiments of those times, on many points, are with difficulty realised now. King, Leslie, Curry, and others, each with his array of proofs and arguments, are bewildering to readers of the present age. King and Leslie were both members of the same Protestant Church, both of great talents, both natives of the north of Ireland, and yet every way opposed in their political opinions. Leslie, the great non-juror, makes Belfast his theme, to vindicate the character and the cause of the Catholic king.

"I appeal," he says, "to Thomas Pottinger, who was then Sovereign of Belfast, the greatest town for trade in the north of Ireland, whether, upon his application to King James, his Majesty did not give him protection after protection for Belfast and the country about? Whether the said Mr. Pottinger did

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bably expresses at this crisis the feelings of the inhabitants of other places as well as that from which it issued. It is styled "The Humble Petition of the Inhabitants of the Town and Parish of Bangor to the Right Hon. General Hamilton commanding the forces now in Ulster." It implores his protection, and that his Excellency may evidence and continue his former clemency, and that they may be secured in their lives, liberties, and properties. It has many signatures, and was found among the spoils of the defeated army after the Battle of the Boyne. See *Letters from Sir Robert Southwell to Mr. John Ellis*.

not, upon his application to King James, obtain leave for the merchants of Belfast and the country about, to return from Scotland and other places whither they had fled, even after the time limited by his Majesty's Proclamation for their return? Whether they did not find their goods preserved for them till their return in August 1689, when Schomberg landed? Whether the Protestants who returned were not received into protection without any oath at all required from them? and that several English ships which came into Belfast (some from the Indies who knew not of the war, others by stress of weather, or other causes) and were seized by the Irish, were always released by King James, were suffered to unload, and load again, and pursue their voyage."<sup>1</sup> These are very direct appeals, though on the other hand it may be alleged that the delay of the fugitives in making their return till Schomberg's fleet and army were at Belfast to protect them was at least a precautionary measure, and that the allegations are altogether contrary to the spirit which the Parliament assembled by King James soon after displayed. It is undoubted that very many persons, impelled either by real or imaginary fears, had fled from the town; even the Collector of the Revenue at Belfast had deserted his post, and was among the crowd of runaways.<sup>2</sup> To restore confidence to the Belfast people, and to induce their return, King James, on the 3rd June, 1689, issued this proclamation—

“Whereas, several Merchants, and other our Subjects, late Inhabitants of our Town of Belfast, have quitted their respective Homes, either by the instigation of Persons ill affected to Us, or out of fear, and taken up of Arms; or seduced by sly and false Insinuations from the Duty and Allegiance they owe to us, by means whereof they are very much impoverished in their Fortunes, and they and their whole Families reduced to great wants in strange places, to the Depopulation of our said Town, and lessening of Trade and Commerce therein.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Leslie's *Answer to King*, p. 148, as quoted in the Historical Collections relative to Belfast.

<sup>2</sup> For the names of those who fled from Belfast and other places near, with the estimated value of their estates at the time, see Appendix No. 12.

<sup>3</sup> The fugitives did not all leave their goods behind them. The English Commissioners of Customs report to the Lords of the Treasury, 29th April, 1689,

Now, forasmuch, as we have received Information that the said Persons are by woful experience convinced that they have been thus misled and frightened from their Duty by Persons for the most part desperate in their Fortunes, or disaffected unto Us and our Government, and that they do heartily repent of their having been so imposed upon, and do resolve to return again unto their Habitations, Trade, and Commerce, so as they may receive our assurance of Pardon for the time past, and Protection for the time to come : and We being willing and resolved to reclaim our Subjects by mercy, and to show that we rather delight to forgive than to punish, do hereby promise to give a full, general, and free pardon and indemnity for the crime of High Treason to all such person or persons as have for the space of Twelve Months last past inhabited our Town of Belfast, and shall within the space of forty Days return to their Dwellings and Habitations there ; as also full Pardon and indemnity of all pains and forfeitures which the said Parties, or any of them might have incurred, or be subject or liable to, upon account of having committed the said crime of High Treason, and that the said Persons and every of them may peaceably and quietly enjoy their Estates, Houses, Stocks, Goods, Chattels, Lands, Tenements, and Hereditaments, within the said Town of Belfast, or elsewhere, they, upon their arrival, severally taking the usual Oath of Allegiance and Fidelity to us before the Sovereign, or other Chief Magistrate for the time being of our said Town of Belfast. And of this our Will and Pleasure, thus signified in behalf of our said Subjects, late Inhabitants of Belfast, we hereby will and require all our Officers, both Civil and Military, to take notice ; and that they presume not to imprison, indict, or molest any Person or Persons, either in their Persons or Goods, who upon this our Indulgence can claim the benefit of this our free Grace and Favour.

“ Given at our Court at Dublin Castle the 3rd day of  
June 1689, and in the 5th year of our Reign.

“ By his Majesty’s Command,

“ MELFORT.”

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“ that on the Petition of Sir John Magill Baronet and James Hamilton Esq. on behalf of themselves and others touching their plate, household goods, and other necessaries which they lately brought with them from Ireland, from whence they were forced to fly for their lives into England, their said goods being detained at Whitehaven ; recommending that these and similar goods should be passed custom free.”—*Calendar of Treasury Papers, 1557–1696*, vol. iii., p. 37.

It would surely have been a hard measure even to think of exacting customs on goods in such a predicament ; yet the minute from the higher powers is, “ Order’d in this particular case, but will not give a general direction in all such cases.”



The Proclamation was probably not effectual in persuading the inhabitants of Belfast to return in June; but in reference to the whole matter the annexed information is certainly in favour of the efficient protection which the town received, and is a better view of the state of Belfast in the period immediately preceding the arrival of Schomberg than any hitherto known. The documents here following are quite connected with the preceding details. The Queen to whom they were referred was, it may be unnecessary to say, Mary, the consort of William the Third, and they are inserted here, a little before their chronological era, purely to make the narrative continuous.

“TO THE QUEEN’S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

*“The humble Petition of Thomas Pottinger of Belfast in the Kingdom of Ireland Merchant,*

“SHEWETH,

“That your Pet<sup>r</sup> being Sovereign of Belfast aforesaid on the Irish Army’s Descent into the North, the whole Inhabitants & Merchants (a few excepted) transported themselves & Families into Scotland & other parts, leaving their houses, goods and effects behind them. And seeing the ruin that was like to fall on the said Town & places adjacent your Pet<sup>r</sup> resolved to stay for the preservacō of the same, and accordingly under God was the means thereof, by going to Gen<sup>l</sup> Hamilton and procuring a Protection for the Town and Goods therein and Country about it, which preserved the same till the Army was past and a Gen<sup>l</sup> order for all Sheriffs to take into their Custody all goods of Absentees, and those that had been in Armes. And the Sheriff of the County by his Sub-sheriffs & other Com<sup>rs</sup> having taken accompt of the Goods in Town to take them into his Custody, your Pet<sup>r</sup> did for preservacō of the same Repair to Dublin, where he obtained a Protection for the Town and Goods of the whole Inhabitants absent and present, to their great Comforts and to the great disappointment<sup>t</sup> of others who did intend to enrich themselves thereby; And tho there were six Companies of Foot and two Troops of Dragoons always quartered in Town, and other forces in the Country about it, by your Pet<sup>rs</sup> endeavours with them, to his great Cost & Charges from time to time, not any part of the protection was violated until it pleased God Duke Schomberg arrived, when there being few Gentry in the Country, your Pet<sup>r</sup> had the whole Charge of quartering his Forces in Town & places adjacent, and the transporting the Baggage to Carrickfergus in order to the Siege and after to Dundalk and furnishing horses



from severall parts to carry bread & other provisions with the Army, and likewise waited on the Duke at Dundalk to take care of the sick men on their return to Winter Quarters, furnishing them a Hospitall & Storehouse of his own without payment. These and many other good offices were done by him to the great satisfaction of the Gen<sup>l</sup> and all the Gen<sup>l</sup> Officers & others, as by ample Certificates will appear. Your Pet<sup>rs</sup> great Expence therein being well known to them, he having during his whole year spent what money he had of his own, or could procure, nor was he reimbursed one penny, there being no Revenue belonging to the Corpora<sup>co</sup>n; and since God has preserved the Place, to the great satisfaction of yo<sup>r</sup> Army, and the encrease of yo<sup>r</sup> Ma<sup>ts</sup> Revenue, w<sup>ch</sup> he hopes will prove in time as formerly, wherein he hath been a great Instrument, and is in hopes by yo<sup>r</sup> Ma<sup>ts</sup> encouragem<sup>t</sup> to do the like, being the first that went from the said Port to foreign Parts to trade, the Revenue then not exceeded 1000<sup>lb</sup> per Ann. w<sup>ch</sup> before the troubles paid yearly above 16,000<sup>lb</sup>: And your Ma<sup>ts</sup> encouragem<sup>t</sup> to the said Corpora<sup>co</sup>n in some time may do the like.<sup>1</sup>

“Your Pet<sup>r</sup> therefore most humbly prays that your Ma<sup>ty</sup> will be graciously pleased to take the premisses into your Princely Considera<sup>co</sup>n, and so to Recomend your Pet<sup>rs</sup> Case to the Lords Justices of Ireland for his Reliefe as that he may be thereby satisfied for those pains and Charges w<sup>ch</sup> he so willingly was at in your Ma<sup>ts</sup> Service, and by which he may be the better enabled to pursue his trade again, and be further serviceable to your Ma<sup>ts</sup> Interest there.

“And your Pet<sup>r</sup> shall ever pray, &c.”

“At the Court at Whitehall July the 4th 1691. Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> is graciously pleased to Refer this Peti<sup>co</sup>n to the Rt Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Lords Justices of Ireland to consider thereof, and Report what her Ma<sup>ty</sup> may fitly do therein for the Pet<sup>rs</sup> Gratifica<sup>co</sup>n, whereupon her Ma<sup>ty</sup> will declare her further pleasure.

“*Vera Copia.*”

“NOTTINGHAM.”

“May it please your L<sup>ops</sup>,

“In obedience to her Ma<sup>ts</sup> Order of Reference upon the within

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<sup>1</sup> This is a great claim on the part of Thomas Pottinger—that he was the first that went from this port to foreign parts to trade, when £1000 a-year was the Customs Revenue of Belfast. The language is perhaps boastful in the former instance, though he was a merchant and shipowner about the time of the Restoration, but so were many others.

Peticoñ of Thomas Pottinger of Belfast Merchant, We have examined the Allegacoñs therein set forth, and do find by the Testimony of the R<sup>t</sup> Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Earle of Drogheda, S<sup>r</sup> John Topham Kn<sup>t</sup> Judge Advocate of their Ma<sup>ts</sup> Army, and divers other persons of Quality and Credit, who personally appear'd before us to evidence the same, That the Pet<sup>r</sup> was very serviceable to their Ma<sup>ts</sup> Affairs as he was Sovereign of Belfast, and otherwise at the first landing of the Army, under the late Duke of Schomberg, and at Considerable expence for his zeale to their Ma<sup>ts</sup> service in divers occasions, for w<sup>ch</sup> We humbly conceive the Pet<sup>r</sup> may be an object of her Ma<sup>ty</sup> Royal Bounty to be extended to him in such manner as her Ma<sup>ty</sup> shall think fit.

“CHA. PORTER.

THO. CONINGESBY.

“March 30th, 1692.

“*Vera Copia.*”

“At the Court of Whitehall June the 28, 1692. Her Ma<sup>ty</sup> having been made acquainted with this Report, is Graciously pleased to direct that it be transmitted together with the Papers annexed to the R<sup>t</sup> Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Lords Com<sup>rs</sup> of the Treasury for their Lōps Consideration, and to Report what her Ma<sup>ty</sup> may fitly do therein, whereupon her Ma<sup>ty</sup> will Declare her further pleasure.

“NOTTINGHAM.

“*Vera Copia.*”

“These are to Certifie that Thomas Pottinger being Sovereign of Belfast in Ireland, on the landing of their Ma<sup>ts</sup> Forces in that Kingdom was very serviceable to them, having the whole Charge of Quartering the Army in Town and Countrey adjacent, and likewise with great Care and Diligence provided Horses and had the Baggage and other things carefully carried to Carrickfergus in order to the Siege of that place and afterwards was very carefull of the same, to forward the Bread, Baggage and other things towards Dundalk, and paid great Civilities to the Officers. And likewise waited on the Gen<sup>l</sup> at Dundalk to take care of the sick men on their Return to Winter Quarters, and other affairs of the Army, all w<sup>ch</sup> he performed with great Care & Diligence on his own Charge to the great satisfaction of the Gen<sup>l</sup> and other the Officers of the Army, and as I am well informed was the only means to preserve the Town and the Countrey about with their Goods in the absence of his Neighbours, w<sup>ch</sup> has been of great use to their Ma<sup>ts</sup> Army. Given under my hand this 26th day of June 1691.

“*Vera Copia.*”

“LEINSTER.

“Mr. Pottinger hath likewise Certificates of the same Contents from

“LIEUT.-GENERALL DOUGLAS.  
LIEUT.-GENERALL MACKAY.  
S<sup>r</sup> HENRY BELLASYSE.  
BRIGADIER STEWART.  
BRIGADIER LEVESON.  
Co<sup>ll</sup> DOUCETT, and from  
THE CORPORATION OF BELFAST.”<sup>1</sup>

All this was very creditable to Thomas Pottinger as far as official documents can be relied on, but he does not produce any testimony in his favour from the Corporation, though he says it had been given to him by that body. On the contrary, he earned the animosity, at least, of the formal narrator of the proceedings of King William in Belfast, as will appear in the examination of the Records. At the same time, the papers must be accepted as a correct representation, with some little colouring perhaps in the petitioner's favour, of the state of Belfast during the period of dismay. Pottinger seems to have retained his station even when the Williamite influence was dominant, and the evidence is to much extent exculpatory of his general conduct. These papers were unknown to Leslie, and have been but recently brought to light. It would be desirable to learn, however, if Pottinger exerted himself to counteract the effect of De Rosen's famous proclamation, which set forth that a considerable number of the rebels of Londonderry, with their wives and children, had obtained shelter in Belfast,<sup>2</sup> and that they were all to be driven by this order out of the town to the walls of the besieged city. No original information has been obtained to corroborate or otherwise the alleged connection of Belfast, as described, with this barbarous order. If acted on, a notice of the circumstance should have found its way into some local document or contemporary pamphlet.

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of Treasury Papers*, edited by Joseph Redington, Esq., 1557-1696, vol. xx. 3, p. 260. The papers here copied in full were never before printed.

<sup>2</sup> Curry's *Civil Wars*, vol. ii., p. 178.

## CHAPTER X.

## GENERAL HISTORY.—CONTINUED.

THE Irish Parliament for many years back had been a defunct body, no members appearing for Belfast since Knight and Davys were sent to represent the town after the Restoration. The assembling of a Parliament was one of the earliest measures of the King, and its constitution was necessarily affected by the recent essential changes which had been made in the Corporations. The member for Belfast to this Parliament, which met on the 7th of May, was Mark Talbot, Lieutenant-Colonel of the Earl of Antrim's foot regiment. This was the famous Parliament which was opened in Dublin by King James in person, clad in his royal robes and with his crown upon his head. It passed many measures, several of them, to all appearance, desirable and just. But it was also the Parliament which broke in upon the Act of Settlement; which confiscated the estates of more than two thousand of the King's Protestant subjects, either absent from the Kingdom or supposed to be inimical to a Catholic monarch; which debased the coinage to a ludicrous extent, and which disturbed the trading interest of the country. Some of the objectionable measures of the Parliament, certain to have led, if succeeded by the necessary power to uphold them, to exasperation and enduring strife, are said by the King's advocates to have passed contrary to his wishes.

Much of Ulster was at this time in a state of submission to James, but the wonderful defence of Derry and the unconquerable bravery of the Enniskillen men made the preponderance in the north-west of the province in favour of the Protestant cause. Belfast and all the places adjacent were in forced subjection; and it has been frequently stated that, if the actions of the ruling

monarch had been guided now by greater wisdom, the scale might have been turned in his favour. William's course was impeded by many discouragements in his new English dominions; and Northern Ireland was left to struggle alone—in rebellion, as Catholics then, and non-jurors afterwards, averred—against their King, whose presence in the land should have ensured obedience.

It was finally determined in English councils that this dispute should be contested and ended on Irish ground; and Belfast, though the language is perhaps not strictly correct, was selected as the base of operations. This town was fated to assume once more rather an important position in the events of the approaching war, and its value again come to be measured, as it had been during the Parliamentary and Cromwellian contests, not like many other places in Ireland by its strength, size, or population, but by its convenience, its situation, the inclination of its inhabitants, and the general feeling in favour of King William which prevailed in the country around it. Belfast Lough was therefore selected as the most suitable point to which to send the fleet and army from England. Before doing so, inquiry was made regarding it, and certain seafaring people sent the following favourable report of the advantages of this bay for the desired purposes, and which was presented to the Duke of Schomberg on the 24th July, 1689:—

“It is a very bold and safe harbour; the biggest ships, if acquainted, may turn in with all winds and tides. Ships of 200 tons may go up the river within three miles of Belfast without being commanded by the Castle of Carrickfergus. Men-of-war may anchor and ride in the Lough out of command of the same fort or Castle, safe from all storms, winter and summer. Above the said fort of Carrickfergus upon the river the ships may lie on ground on both sides, and land men and horse upon a sandy hard ground when the tide is out. But on the County of Down on the South east side is judged best to land. There is no castle or fort except Carrickfergus on this River.”

The advice was acted on, and fourteen days after the siege of Derry was raised, and while Belfast and Carrickfergus were in

possession of King James—namely, on the 13th August, 1689—the English fleet, with Duke Schomberg, the commander appointed to conduct the Irish war, and conveying an army of 10,000 men, anchored in Belfast Lough. The garrison in Carrickfergus beheld the sight with dread, but no opposition was offered to the disembarkation, which has been thought a proof of defective arrangement on the Irish side, as, if due vigour had been exhibited in resisting the invaders on the night of their arrival, or immediately on their landing, they might have been at the very first repulsed. Rumour had vastly overrated their number, and they came ashore at Groomsport, near Bangor, in the county of Down, a few miles from Belfast. Detachments of James's army were stationed at all the outlying places in the neighbourhood of this town, but could offer, when a footing was once gained, no effectual resistance. The whole story connected with the landing, the occupation of Belfast, and collateral circumstances, will be better depicted in contemporary documents than in any condensed narrative founded on them, and in that form therefore the history of the Revolution in Belfast will be chiefly related.

“Schomberg sailed at 8 in the morning from Hoylake with 14 Regiments of Foot, and at one the day following landed at Bangor well received ; boats being two leagues from the land, the enemy fled ; the Protestants so comforted that the shore was soon covered with horses, cows, and sheep for the benefit of the army ; a quarter of mutton sold for 6d. Schomberg made Mr. Hamilton's house at Bangor his head quarters. The men stood to their arms all night. On a report that the enemy intended to burn Belfast and Lisburn, Colonel Wharton's Regiment of Foot pushed on to Belfast the day after landing. Two days after the army marched to and encamped at Belfast, and soon after began the siege of Carrick. No horse from England. The Inniskillings joined and were welcome.”

Another account says—

“The Shore was all crowded with Protestants,—men, women, and children,—old and young falling on their knees with tears in their eyes thanking God and the English for their deliverance. The fleet arrived at 11 and by 7 in the evening there had landed 10,000 men. Nothing could be more eager than the soldiers ; when the general



ordered a detachment for Belfast they gave a great shout, and went away to meet the enemy with all the vigour and cheerfulness imaginable."

The next letter is more explicit, and is entitled—

"Good News from the Camp at Bangor August 17th, 1689. It being late before we could get our men landed and the enemy being within six miles of us 500 strong, horse and dragoons, which were that morning in Bangor but fled to Belfast on sight of the fleet; and we having no horse to act as scouts our position was somewhat hazardous. So the General ordered that no one should offer to sleep on pain of death, but that we should work all night in throwing up a breastwork round our Camp, and every Regiment to have a strong Outguard. 'For,' said he, 'if the enemy have one dram of wit or courage they will attack us this night since they must never expect the like opportunity to happen again.' Accordingly, considering the hurry of the thing we had by one o'clock made a very strong and formidable entrenchment. At three a false alarm by an insane soldier caused the whole army to turn out in good order."

Schomberg at once occupied Belfast, and on the 20th August besieged Carrickfergus, which in a few days surrendered. He issued a proclamation at the same time, probably with some reference to outrageous events<sup>1</sup> which occurred after the siege of

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<sup>1</sup> All writers concur in saying that Carrickfergus was very gallantly defended by the Irish, and a considerable number of men were lost on both sides; but the expression above refers to the treatment inflicted both on combatants and non-combatants, particularly women, after the surrender. The statement will be found in many histories of the time, and is corroborated in very peculiar language in a cotemporary pamphlet entitled *Great News from the Duke of Schomberg's Army*, and may be an undisguised epitome of the general conduct. "They, that is, King James's party, marched out from Carrickfergus, a regiment of Dutch before them, and Captain Thomas Prevost with thirty horse behind to convey them past Lisburn, but in spite of him and his horse the country fell upon them and took their arms. The women likewise fell upon their trulls and unrigged them of every thing they had on. I saw a townswoman come up to one Eveline, and cry—'You, this is my gown, off with it.' Another cried—'This is my petticoat, off with it;' a third with open mouth swore the smock was hers, and a little girl cried the hood upon her head was hers also. So they fell to it who should get their own first, and to tearing they went, so that gown, petticoat, smock, hood, though good clothes, were not worth two pence by the time they had been torn off, so that Eveline ran about naked crying O ye, O ye; and we did suppose that by the time they passed Lisburn, which is seven miles from Belfast, they would have nothing left but their lives." Could this have been the Belfast mob of 1689?—*Pinkerton MSS.*

Carrickfergus, and which the Duke himself personally endeavoured to restrain.<sup>1</sup>

From the time of Schomberg's first entrance into the country, and during nearly the year which he occupied it before William's arrival, and while James was in Dublin exercising kingly authority, transactions such as those which the following entries describe were passing where the influence of the English army reached. They are, except the first, without date, but that, under the circumstances, is immaterial.

"Belfast, August 25th, 1689.

"The Inniskilling horse joined; some without boots; others with boots but without carabines; some with one pistol and a carabine without a sword; others without all, or with only a fowling piece or firelock; most of their horses small and poor. Yet such have been the courage and actions of these men as is scarce credible. These brave men the General made welcome, and they will soon be better armed and equipped."

"There is a Troop of Inniskilling horse commanded by Captain Kelling, containing Fifty men that are not regimented but a flying party; they are upon account of no purchase, no pay; they are all chosen, brisk men, scouring several miles a night, bring in great store of Cattle, and give little quarter to the Irish."

"The Inniskilling horse—the advanced Guard—from their zealous service, and the large Preys of Cattle they brought into the Camp, styled *the Duke of Schomberg's Tartars*."

"Captain Stewart being left to manage 800 men in the Glens commanded by a natural son of the Earl of Antrim, suppressed and took a large prey of Cattle from them."

"Colonel Hastings' Regiment lies at Belfast, part of which has lately taken abundance of food out of the rebels' hands; they have taken 1800 cows from them during the last two months."

This predatory warfare was no doubt met on the other side by reprisals when opportunity occurred.

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<sup>1</sup> Schomberg had his head-quarters at Belfast for a little time, and there is said to be a picture extant—though not procurable, after every inquiry—showing the tents of King William's army commencing at Mill Street, and stretching in the direction of the Falls and Malone. It must have been at best but temporary head-quarters of the entire army, as the advance southward was just at hand.

"A Priest and two others were arrested at Belfast as spies, and brought before Schomberg. He generously set them at liberty, desiring them to go with all haste to King James, and say that he (Schomberg) was on his way to visit the King at Dublin."

Schomberg, to all appearance by his own authority, one month after his arrival in Ireland, issued a proclamation restoring former magistrates and corporations. Under the proclamation so issued, and from being well assured that the town had been made secure for their occupation, the fugitives from Belfast now generally returned. They found, according to the King's apologists (though the proclamation, without naming any place particularly, expresses that much damage had been done), their property and premises uninjured; and the truth probably is that as little waste had been committed as could naturally have been anticipated during so many months of military occupation. Schomberg, on the 2nd of September, moved southward from this town. Story<sup>1</sup> says, "the country as we passed was all destroyed by the Irish," which corresponds with the accounts of others. The army reached Dundalk on the 14th September. An encampment was formed near that place, causing very disastrous consequences. A mortality fell upon the army, which has been the theme of every writer on the subject, and is not perhaps by any of them much exaggerated. Belfast was selected as the most suitable place for the reception of the numerous invalids. They were sent in incredible numbers to the Great

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<sup>1</sup> George Story was an Englishman, and chaplain to the regiment of Sir Thomas Gower. He has written largely on the history of the revolutionary wars, and is deemed an impartial authority. The general titles of his works are *An Impartial History of the Wars of Ireland* (1693), and *A True and Impartial History of the most Material Occurrences in the Kingdom of Ireland during the two last Years* (1694). He calls himself an eye-witness of the scenes which he describes. His notices about Belfast are valuable, and some are inserted as they occur. He became Dean of Connor in 1694, and may therefore be supposed to have known the town. It is to be hoped he wrote as a true and impartial witness, as he certainly did as a meek and modest one, when he inserted this paragraph in one of his works, and which is curious as an agricultural fact: "By the time we got to Newry I was forced to go and dig Potatoes which made the greatest part of a Dinner to better Men than Myself" (p. 42).

Hospital of Belfast, as it was called, to be at the head of which Dr. Lawrence was despatched from the camp by the general.<sup>1</sup> Thomas Pottinger alludes to this hospital in his petition, his words therein leaving it to be inferred that the establishment was originated by his individual exertions. Yet notwithstanding its hoped-for efficacy, so great was the mortality that from the 1st November to 1st May following 3762 men died within it.<sup>2</sup> So dreadful a calamity could not happen without affecting the health and condition of the town itself, not yet restored to a settled state by its returning inhabitants; and accordingly the same authority informs us that "he has sometimes stood upon the street (of Belfast) and seen ten or a dozen corpses of the townspeople go by in little more than half-an-hour."<sup>3</sup>

These statements may be beyond the truth, but there is no doubt that this first English army was greatly weakened by disease only, to the extent, according to some accounts, of nearly one-half of its entire number. In consequence of this it required to be recruited from England and elsewhere with fresh levies from time to time, and the accounts of the arrival of these troops in Belfast make occasionally very lively pictures. This town became the principal place for the troops, Lisburn being chosen for Schomberg's head-quarters. The remains of the broken army and the new arrivals were disposed of during the remainder of the winter and the early months of 1690 in convenient quarters, to recruit their strength<sup>4</sup> and prepare for the eventful summer, when, it was expected, William would himself lead them in person to the strife of kings.

Schomberg has been blamed for inactivity and want of judgment in the beginning of this war. He, on the other hand, complains of the soldiers, and more especially of the indolence and incapacity of the officers. Dr. Gorges, his secretary, bears out the description of the materials with which the old warrior

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<sup>1</sup> *War Office Papers.*    <sup>2</sup> *Story's Impartial History*, p. 50.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.

<sup>4</sup> For the winter quarters of the different divisions of King William's army, see Appendix No. 13.

had to work. Disregard to proclamations, indiscriminate plunder of the entire country, and riotous living, were indulged in to excess.<sup>1</sup> It must be mentioned that this misconduct to County Antrim friends, by the troops whose presence they had so ardently desired, scarcely corresponds with the evidence handed down by other writers; and that it does not appear, when opportunity served, to have been unrepessed. It is a fact, however, to which Dr. Gorges himself testifies, though the plunder of Schomberg's Tartars may have been rather indiscriminate—not being perhaps anxious to inquire, when tempting cattle were at their disposal, whether they belonged to Catholics or Protestants—that the latter, though despoiled and robbed, clung to the English army, and were ever their warm supporters. Little events occurring within our own boundaries may partially corroborate these statements, and form at the same time a fragment of the history of Belfast. The short notices here following prove great irregularity of conduct.

“Several officers had occasioned their own deaths by drinking Irish Usquebaugh to excess, particularly Sir Edwd. Deering, Colonel Whar-ton, and Sir Thos. Gower.”

“A quarrel lately happened here (Belfast) when two seamen were killed by three Lieutenants of Col. Kirke's Regiment, for which they were soon after shot in the Market Place.”<sup>2</sup>

“Colonel Herbert in his frenzy shot himself in the head with his pistol, and one Captain Garrot stabbed himself in the throat. A French officer in Lisburn threw himself out of a third story window.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gorges was with Schomberg at this time in Lisburn or Belfast; at least such may be supposed, as it is said that “the wife of Dr. Gorges was allowed to come from Dublin to join her husband at Lisburn, exchanged for other gentlewomen in the North, with a captain and flag of truce to treat about prisoners.”

<sup>2</sup> This event in the Belfast Market Place is more fully related by Story. He says, “About Christmas there happened an unlucky Accident at Belfast. Cranmen, Bowls, and Morley, three Lieutenants in Major-General Kirk's Regiment, happened to Kill two Masters of Ships, and being tryed by a Court-Marshal the thing appeared so ill that they were all three shot.”—Story's *History*, p. 51.

<sup>3</sup> Letter from Belfast, 22nd January, 1690.

"Four soldiers were hanged at Lisburn for breaking open the Magazine in Belfast."<sup>1</sup>

These casualties and disorders, together with the extent of sickness in the town, made this a deplorable winter. Schomberg, in his proclamations against drunkenness and profane swearing, imputes their disasters at Dundalk, and the distemper now prevailing in Belfast, to these and other gross delinquencies.

"The Army of Schomberg," it is related, "spent a great deal of Money in the North, and a great deal was made by buying the Cattle taken by the Soldiers as Preys.<sup>2</sup> Vast preys were taken. Several of the Scottish merchants, that used before the late War to beat upon the hoof after a poney laden with Pedlar's goods, to the fairs and markets, became owners of ships at sea, and warehouses crammed with goods at home."

"Being in Belfast in 1690 a little before his Majesty landed there, one of the chaplains of the army walking on the quay in his gown was spied by a parcel of demitars in blue bonnets, who came in a boat from Scotland to sell oatmeal and eggs; they were so transported with rage at the sight that they began without more ado to revile him and belch out curses and opprobrious words against him, and would have offered him violence had they not been made to know by some gentlemen that they were not in their own country."

"Two clergymen walking in their gowns on the Bridge of Belfast, one who considered himself a topping gentleman took up the Skirt of one of the gowns in a jibing manner, and told them that the Bishops were put down in Scotland."

Many names of historic repute arise occasionally to view as connected with Schomberg and his army. The famous admiral, Sir Cloudesly Shovel, for instance, was one of these. He was perfectly familiar with the Lough of Belfast, and reports of his actions on our coasts are frequent in historical documents of the period.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Letter from Belfast, 22nd January, 1690.

<sup>2</sup> This view corresponds with that of Dr. Gorges. The soldiers made preys, and sold the plunder to speculative small merchants. If quite correct, it was military licence contrary to proclamations, and of the most extreme description. The reference is *A Discourse concerning Ireland, &c.*

<sup>3</sup> *Treasury Papers*, vol. xxvi., p. 41.



The few communications following are more important, and have intimate relation with the public history of the town. They are presumed to be in most cases entirely original.

“Belfast, March 13th, 1689.

“Our men are all brave, and I doubt not but they are all sure to the cause. If their officers at any time but let them see the Irish they run on like lions, and will hardly be brought off again.

“The Prince of Wirtenbergh came here on Tuesday, and Duke Schombergh met him in great state and ceremony. They dined together at the Castle. The Prince is a jolly man, much like Prince George. All the Danes are comely, proper men as can be seen. The Foot are every thing that can be wished for by a General—lusty, healthy, rugged fellows, well disciplined, well clothed, very neat and cleanly, arms as bright as silver, all firelocks and cartouch boxes. This Town is so full of Generals, Major Generals, Brigadiers, Quarter Master Generals, and other great officers, and Dr. Walker,<sup>1</sup> that I have got no bed this two nights.”

“Belfast, 18 March, 1690.

“The Prince of Wirtemberg came to this town on Tuesday last with a very great and regular train, and many brave led horses, as well of his own as belonging to other General Officers. The Duke of Schomberg met him here with the rest of the General Officers; there was indeed much of martial grandeur in their meeting, and much of courtly ceremony. The Duke staid but two nights, the Prince until

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Walker's presence in Belfast at this time no doubt created a sensation. He was here again in times even more stirring than March, 1690—that is, on the eve of King William's arrival, and during his stay in the town, accompanying him afterwards, to his own misfortune, to the Boyne. The diary of Dean Davis (*Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. iv., p. 85), which mentions the fact of Dr. Walker's being in Belfast in June, is an exceedingly curious document; it makes many allusions to the customs of the times, to Schomberg's army at Lisburn, and to Belfast, but is singularly barren of topographical notices. He says he preached at the meeting-house at “Dun Murray;” viewed the town from a boat; mentions repeatedly the names of individuals—officers or innkeepers—at what places he dined or refreshed himself, and what he paid for the same; but is entirely silent respecting the size and appearance of the place, of any buildings within it, or inhabitants then exercising authority or otherwise conspicuous. The name mentioned of one of the inns, “The Eagle and Child,” was still known in Belfast about half-a-century later; and it is supposed that one of the “innholders” was the predecessor of a family subsequently, and down till recent days, of much wealth and position in the town; but no scrutiny of the diary could extract from it a clue for any extended archæological or topographical details.

Saturday, and then went to his own Head Quarters. This Town differs little from a Camp, for here is now such a continual hurry with all things that belong to an Army, that night and day, Sabbath and working day, differ little. All the teams of horse are employed by turns to carry up to the frontiers, bread, cheese, meal, malt, hay, oats, bombs, mortars, cannon, powder, shot, arms, clothes, tents, &c., without number or measure. The soldiers are recovered from sickness to a wonder; the regiments are well recruited again with taking in some of this country men, every Colonel being anxious to show the King a full Regiment at his coming; and it is known that the King may have ten thousand of these country men in his army at a short warning, all stout men and sworn enemies to the Irish, which they fully expect and wish that he may be witness to what they intend to do for his service; and I am out of doubt but that the whole army, if ever the Irish engage them, will show themselves as brave as ever any English army did."

"Belfast, 22 March, 1690.

"One Colonel Hill who was formerly Governor of the Scotch Highlanders, and has for many years been Steward to my Lord Donegall in this Town, has received a Commission from the King to be Governor of Lochaber in Scotland, and is going away this Evening on board the Dartmouth, which is now commanded by Captain Pottinger, who has under his command the Lark and Mary, and another, and has orders to cruise about the Isle of Mull, or wherever he shall find any rebels; great things are expected from him, for he understands all these places to perfection, and is a man brave, true, and industrious."<sup>1</sup>

This letter is noted as having come from a person of good intelligence and credit in Belfast.

The agitation in Belfast increased as the King's advent approached. William had resolved to break away from his domineering Parliament, and no course was so open to effect a decisive termination of his perplexities as the settlement of Ireland. His army, friends, and adherents were almost entirely in the North, and to the North he accordingly came. His career and actions in Ireland are well known, and some quotations from a

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<sup>1</sup> The Captain Pottinger here mentioned with such commendation was, it is considered, brother of the Sovereign, and the two names are conjoined at an earlier period and in their commercial relations as Thomas and Edward Pottinger.

pamphlet, entitled *An Exact Account of His Majesty's Progress from his First Landing in Ireland till his Arrival at Hillsborough*,<sup>1</sup> will supply sufficient details, as it is a production in which Belfast figures on a considerable scale, though a portion of the information is not original.

“Lisburn, June 12th.

“We expect the King with impatience. The Castle of Belfast and the Castle of Hillsborough are prepared in the best manner to receive his Majesty. The streets of Belfast are daily swept, and not a horse permitted to go into any stable there, but all kept clean for the King and his Retinue.”

“Belfast, June 16th.

“The General (Schomberg) expecting the King's landing came here on Friday afternoon, and sent men to all the adjacent Coasts to watch ; and at nine o'clock that night the post boy from Donaghadee brought advice that the King had passed.

“On Saturday about three o'clock in the afternoon the General received advice that his Majesty was come into the Lough, and thereupon in his coach and set of small black Barbary horses posted away to meet the King at Carrickfergus. The King immediately after landing mounted his horse<sup>2</sup> and rode through the main streets of the town, where almost numberless crowds received him with continued shouts and acclamations on till the Whitehouse, where he met the General's carriage at four o'clock. He was pleased then to dismount and enter the coach, which, attended by one troop of horse, drove over the Strand to Belfast.

“The uncertainty of the time and place of the King's landing, and the suddenness of the news at last prevented many of the multitude, and the quickness of the General's movements prevented many from

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<sup>1</sup> London, 1690.

<sup>2</sup> This scarcely accords with the account that King William, immediately after landing at Carrickfergus, sat down and rested a considerable time on a chair which was provided for him. This chair was long preserved in Carrickfergus, and there is now in St. George's Church, Belfast, a chair supposed to be the same. It is quite impossible to gain strict accuracy in minor statements. The entry in the Corporate Records of Carrickfergus, or rather in the copy taken therefrom by Dean Dobbs in 1785, and which is undoubtedly a faithful transcript, does not mention any chair or riding through the streets as recorded above, but says simply, “1690, 14th June. This day King William landed (came over in the Mary yacht) on the Key, and within halfe-an-hour went to Bellfaste.” Another observer might mention something differing from all these.

seeing the King enter the town. Yet there were abundance to meet him at the North Gate, where he was received by the Sovereign and Burgesses in their formalities, a guard of the Foot Guards, and a general continued shout from thence to the Castle of—God Bless our Protestant King, God bless King William.

“The King found a very fine garden at the back of the Castle in which he walked previous to entering the building.

“As the King was coming over the Strand<sup>1</sup> another coach of the General's met him, which his Grace called to, and ordered to be driven straight forward to the Whitehouse to receive such persons of quality as they should find landing.

“Not far from the North Gate the King was met by Mr. George Walker, late Governor of Londonderry, and about Twelve of the Episcopal Clergy, who followed the Coach to the Castle, and when

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<sup>1</sup> In this narrative of King William's entry into Belfast in 1690 there is a discrepancy with regard to the gate by which he entered. The account was probably written by some one not acquainted with the town nomenclature. The belief always has been that the entrance was made by the North Gate at the top of what was then known as North Street, close to the present John Street. It was called by distinction the North Gate, and is twice mentioned in the above narrative as the point at which or near which the King was met and received by the town officials and the episcopal clergy, but it is also twice mentioned in the very same account that he crossed the Strand, the entrance into the town from which direction would have been the Strand Gate at Mary Street, a street not now existing. It is beyond the writer's power to reconcile these apparent contradictions. It is hardly possible to conceive that both gates could have been called indifferently by the same title. Story's historical account of the entry of King William into Belfast does not explain the point. On the whole it does not materially differ from that expressed above, so far as it goes; but as it is a narrative, by a second eye-witness, of a great historical event, and one of much interest in its relation to Belfast, some portions of it are extracted :—

“1690. The 14th June, being Saturday, the King landed at Carrickfergus about 4 o'clock in the afternoon. . . . Notice being given immediately to the General, who had prepared Sir William Franklin's House at Belfast for his Majesty's reception.” (This, it will of course be understood, was the Castle of Belfast.) . . . “His Grace went in his Coach with all speed to wait on the King: Major General Kirk and several Officers that were there attending the King's landing attended the Duke; his Majesty was met by them near the White House, and received them all very kindly. Coming in the Duke's Coach to Belfast he was met without the Town by a great concourse of People who at first could do nothing but Stare, never having seen a King before in that part of the World, but after a while some of them began to Huzzah, the rest all took it up (as Hounds follow a Scent), and followed the Coach through several Regiments of Foot that were drawn up in Town towards his Majesty's lodgings, and happy were they that could get a sight of him.”—Story's *History*, p. 66.

his Majesty alighted, addressed him in a congratulatory speech on his arrival.

“At night the streets were filled with bonfires and fireworks, which were no sooner lighted than the alarm signal was given by the discharge of guns, so planted that from one place to another throughout the whole country all places had notice of the King’s arrival, and in three hours made bonfires so thick that the whole country seemed in a flame.”

“The Lough between this and Carrickfergus seems like a wood, there being no less than seven hundred sail of ships in it, mostly laden with provisions and ammunition, so that now we fear no more Dunkirk wants, the plenty and order of all things here is most wonderful, and scarcely credible to those who witness it.”

“The great numbers of coaches, waggons, baggage horses and the like is almost incredible to be supplied from England, or any one of the biggest nations of Europe. I cannot think that any army in Christendom hath the like. None but they that see it can believe it.”<sup>1</sup>

King William passed four full days in Belfast, and, reckoning the day of his arrival (Saturday) and that of his departure the Thursday following, portions of two additional.<sup>2</sup> His time was passed in attending to measures connected with such civil affairs as his limited knowledge of the country permitted. He was one Sunday in Belfast, and attended public worship in the church,

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<sup>1</sup> This pamphlet, it will be observed, makes no less than 700 ships the number employed in bringing over King William’s army and the necessary stores and provisions. In Clarke’s *Correspondence*, in Trinity College Library, vol. i., K. 5, there is “An Abstract of the Ships taken up and now employed in the Transportation of their Majesties’ Forces to Ireland,” which makes the “Tonnage 53,360 Tons, at £32,016 per month, equal to £384,196 per annum; the number of ships 539, the Transports from Holland not comprised in the List.” The ships would average, therefore, rather less than 100 tons each. The transports from Holland not being included, the computation in this *Exact Account of His Majesty’s Progress* may not be very much beyond the accurate number. They must have formed a wonderful spectacle in Belfast Lough. George Clarke was Military Secretary to King William. In the *War Office Papers* is a document signed by George Clarke, which states that from his papers Harris drew up his *Life of William the Third*.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Robinson, Commissary of King William’s army in the reduction of Ireland, to Mr. Secretary Blathwaite, writes—“Belfast, 19th June, 1690. His Majesty goes this morning to Hillsborough, having paid a month’s pay to the army,” &c.



when Dr. Royse<sup>1</sup> preached before him; but his chief attention was directed to the reviewing of his army in and near the town, and preparing it for the approaching campaign. He also received many addresses.<sup>2</sup> It is traditionally declared that the King raised some money in Belfast, in which he was energetically assisted by the restored Sovereign, Mr. Leathes, and by Mr. Eccles. Whether the latter was Hugh Eccles, a well-known merchant, or another of the same name who extended his hospitality to the King a few days after, is not stated. The money, it is to be feared, would not have been hard to reckon, but there is really nothing known of the King's daily movements, his personal actions or remarks, while in the town. No diary or other local

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Reid (*History of the Presbyterian Church*, vol. ii., p. 383) mentions Dr. Boyse as the preacher on this occasion, but this is an error. Dr. Royse officiated, preaching from Hebrews xi. 33, *Who through faith subdued kingdoms*. The sermon is in the Library at Armagh. Dr. Royse was Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford. (*Communicated by the Rev. Dr. Reeves, Dean of Armagh.*)

<sup>2</sup> Among the addresses presented to King William in Belfast there is one in verse, but at what place or under what circumstances the King listened to it (if he did listen), is not recorded. It is merely declared to have been presented to him on his arrival at Belfast, and is in the following melodious words :—

“Greatest of Kings, conquer what is your own,  
 And add poor Ireland to sweet England's crown,  
 Pull the stiff neck of every Papist down,  
 Let captives free, who on the willow trees  
 Hang useless harps that tuned such songs as these.  
 Ah ! Mighty Prince, how do our sorrows swell,  
 What tongues or pens can our great miseries tell,  
 Who in the midst of Satan's subjects dwell ?  
 Disarmed, and plundered, captived here we lie,  
 Gladly we would, alas ! but cannot fly,  
 Irish and French insult, triumph, and kill,  
 And who dare say the ruffians have done ill,  
 Since all their law is couched in their will ?  
 Arise, Great Sir, and like a rampant Lion  
 Revenge the affronts of poor distressed Sion.  
 Blest be the Angel brings the best of Kings  
 With expedition on the Cherub's wings,  
 Blest be the wind and tide that wafts you o'er  
 To your sad subjects on the Irish shore ;  
 And ever blessed be they that fight your cause,  
 And with their Swords maintain Great Britain's Laws.

“Thus wish your Majesty's Obedient Subjects.”—*Pinkerton MSS.*



contemporary document has come down to us, which, if in existence, would be precious in the extreme. The Town Records supplement in a small degree the deficiency in personal details.

Belfast did not rank very high as a healthful spot at the Revolution any more than in more recent times. Brief as King William's stay was in it, his friends desired to have it still further abridged. Lieutenant-General Douglass writes thus to Sir Robert Southwell:—

“Belfast, 16 June, 1690.

“I think it absolutely necessary that the King stay no longer in this place, which every body does conclude to be very unhealthful. Lisburn is a healthful place; the air there is much purer, and there is lodging abundant to be had for the whole Court. I hope you will be pleased to mind the King of this.”

General Douglass did not know from this the intentions of the King, and that neither in Belfast nor Lisburn would he make a long sojourn.

Before King William turned his back on this town for ever, he issued a Manifesto or Proclamation, expressing his motives and reasons for this “his Royal Expedition,” as he styles it. It was, that all should enjoy their Liberties and Possessions under a just and equal Government, and that Ireland might experience the benefit of his power and protection. His army is universally enjoined to observe his rules and orders, to abstain from the slightest plunder, pillage, injustice, or extortion, but duly pay the people through whose country they were about to pass for all victuals or other necessities which they might require. It is of some length, and is well and properly worded. This document declares itself as—

“Given at our Court at Belfast the 19th day of June 1690 in the Second Year of our Reign.

“By his Majesties Command,

“GEORGE CLARKE.”

It was the first and last proclamation which ever emanated from a Court Royal in Belfast.

In due time the first results of King William's progress were heard of in Belfast. Captain Akerman, a person in authority in Carrickfergus, writes, under date of 6th July, 1690—"I heartily bless God for the good news and his Majesty's good success; the Lord continue it. I have also received his Majesty's order to send all the Transport Ships to Dublin, as likewise the persons and things belonging to the Standing Hospitall at Belfast which shall be done with all Expedition." Thus the dread evidences of bloodshed and calamity disappeared from the town. The tide of war rolled away to a distance, and though, besides the Boyne, other conflicts and other sieges had to be added to the long roll of Irish battles, the settlement of the Revolution was completed, and Belfast was practically undisturbed by any further warlike contention.

To represent the town in King William's Parliament of 1692, the members were James Macartney and George Macartney.<sup>1</sup> In 1695 the members were James Macartney and the Honourable Charles Chichester, fourth son of the second Earl of Donegall.

During the disturbed times of the Revolution it was not possible for the Chichester family to be permanently resident in the town. The second Earl of Donegall, who succeeded his uncle in 1675, had married Jane Itchingham, by which he acquired the estate of Dunbrody, in the county of Wexford. He was father of Arthur Chichester, the third Earl, who lost his life in Spain in the next century, and was himself, as an absentee, attainted by King James's Parliament in 1689. He was the Earl of whom least is known. He took his place in the House of Lords 5th October, 1692.<sup>2</sup> Some of his connections

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<sup>1</sup> This family of Macartney was probably, on the whole, the most noted which was ever connected with Belfast. They appear as members of Parliament for the town, sovereigns, leading merchants, or enterprising improvers, finally culminating in an Earl of great distinction and ability. Under these circumstances it would be inexpedient to introduce here, or indeed in any one place, all that it will be desirable to say of them, but to reserve for the chapter on the principal men of the 17th century the chief notices of them, though necessarily introducing the names also elsewhere as convenience directs, or as it arises in the course of the narrative.

<sup>2</sup> Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. i., p. 337.

were also attainted, and the revolutionary wars bore hardly on different members of the family.<sup>1</sup>

The King was tolerant and liberal-minded, but unable to pass wise laws in accordance with his own personal opinions. On William's escape from the assassination plot undertaken against him in 1696, a congratulatory address was forwarded to him from this town, signed by the Sovereign, Burgesses, and principal inhabitants. It expresses their determination to defend his person, right, and government against Papists and Jacobites,

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<sup>1</sup> The true story related underneath affords an example of this. It is a petition, entirely an original paper, to King William in these words :—

“TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELT MAJTY.

“*The Humble Petition of John Chichester Brother to the  
Earle of Donnegall,*

“HUMBLY SHEWETH,

“That your Petitioner haveing been a Captain of Foot in ye Army of Ireland many years, and haveing other considerable Imployments and an Estate there, and was deprived of all being an Englishman and a Protestant, and haveing in ye late Revolution Raised and Maintained a Regiment at his own Charge for ye Defence of ye Countrey and your Majesty's Service he continued wth it untill he wth ye rest being Rendered Unable to Keep their Post by ye comeing down of ye Irish Army Retired to Colrain and London Derry wth such Forces as they could Carry wth them from whence wth much Difficulty he sent away his Wife, who is a Person of Quality, and Six Children, tho' Destitute of all means of Subsistence for ye Safety of their Lives, resolving himself to continue wth ye last for yor Majtys Service there wch he did till ye Governour of London-derry refused to give him quarters longer in that place wch he left being himself in so poor a condicon that not haveing money to Pay for his passage he was enforced to give ye Officer of the frigate his Watch and Pistolls.

“May it therefore Please yor most Gracious Majty so far to take ye distressed Condicon of your Petitioner into consideracon that in ye Army yor Majty designs for the Reducement of Ireland in wch yor Petitioner is willing and ready to serve he may be placed in such a Post as yor Majesty shall think most convenient and proper for his former Station and Quality and his present Charge, and in ye mean time that yor Majty wil be pleased to Appoint such Subsistance for him and his Numerous Family as shall Keep them from Perishing.”

Endorsed “J. Chichester. Petition. 1689. For his Matie.”

“Will gratify him as occasion offers.”—*Treasury Papers*, vol. iii., No. 45. Date assigned, about 21st May, 1689.

This petition was acceded to, and John Chichester died in the camp at Dundalk the same year. His wife, the lady of quality referred to as suffering under such misfortunes, was daughter of Viscount Charlemont, and afterwards married Doctor Edward Walkington, Bishop of Down and Connor.—*Lodge's Peerage*, by Archdall, vol. i., p. 331.

and all the adherents of the late King James and the pretended Prince of Wales, and declares William to be their rightful and lawful King, of which they were early assertors. It is worded altogether in very strong terms, and doubtless enunciates the sentiments of a large majority of the inhabitants of Belfast at the era of the Revolution.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Nearly all of the letters and documents in this chapter in connection with Schomberg and King William in Belfast, and commented on in the preceding pages, are in the *Pinkerton MSS.* The very few to which references are made will be distinguishable, and have been obtained from other sources.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE OLD TOWN BOOK, OR SEVENTEENTH CENTURY RECORDS  
OF BELFAST.

THE old Corporation of Belfast had of necessity a book in which to enter their proceedings. The Rev. Dr. Kirkpatrick, first minister of the Second Congregation in Rosemary Street, and the author of the elaborate volume known under the abbreviated title of *Presbyterian Loyalty*, refers to this book in that work as containing proof of the untruthfulness of certain charges brought against his co-religionists in this town, who were accused of exercising undue means in the election of Burgesses, and calls it there "The Public Town Book of Belfast."<sup>1</sup> *Presbyterian Loyalty* was printed in 1713; the book had consequently been then a century in use, computing from the first formation of the Corporation; and the identical volume, so old in Kirkpatrick's time, and to which he makes such distinct allusion, is still in existence. It is no misnomer, therefore, to call it now The Old Town Book. Its contents have been examined with care, and selections from them, with a few additions of similar import from other sources, are collected exclusively in this chapter, as being more likely in such form to interest and attract. Other extracts bearing directly on specific parts of this work are inserted in their proper places, and the book, or rather the Corporate Records which compose its pages, referred to as authorities for the statements made.

It is to be understood that portions only of the entries in the Records have been extracted—much, consisting of the elections of burgesses and others, long details of market regulations, the scale of fees to be taken by legal practitioners, the action of the

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<sup>1</sup> "For the Truth whereof we appeal to the Public Town Book of Belfast."—*Presbyterian Loyalty*, p. 421.

Town Court, the oaths at great length of officials when entering on office, and many other particulars which seemed dull, are omitted, though occupying a very considerable space. The purpose most aimed at in the selections has been to recover a view, however indistinct, of the condition of the town in the days when its history was written in a book by those who, it may be imagined, were familiar with it, and who had it constantly before their eyes; but for such object the Records, even in their utmost fulness, present but a shadowy outline. We would desire to know much more of the employments, the amusements, the thoughts, the domestic life and habits of the dwellers in old Belfast, than can be gleaned from their dim pages. Yet, insufficient as they are to gratify all our wishes, they perhaps contain enough to meet a reasonable curiosity; and many of the present residents of a place which has risen to such eminence, many members, particularly of a reigning Corporation—or rather of three reigning Corporations—now presiding over the affairs of the town, dealing in transactions of immense magnitude—monetary and otherwise—may read with interest, perhaps with a little wonder, of the doings of their predecessors in Belfast in its day of small things.

Limited portions of the following extracts have been already published, in condensed form, in the *History of Belfast* of 1823, in the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, and other places, and are therefore not altogether new, but will be so to most readers; and they are also now, with large additions never before copied, printed in the words of the original. The early years of the Corporation are passed over in the Records with very few entries. If made, they may have been lost; or else the passing events of the hour were thought too trivial to be noted by the town-clerk or scribe of the day, unmindful of the well-known fact that events or circumstances appearing entirely undeserving of preservation by contemporaries are often of the very highest interest to succeeding generations.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The history of the Town Book requires a short notice. It was a sort of privilege in old times to obtain a sight of it. The writer, when preparing the



The reports have not been made with the precision of modern official writing; and where obscurity or want of completeness is observed, the defect must be attributed to the imperfection of the original. Selecting the entries in the best manner that can be done, and observing, as far as practicable at least, a form of regularity, it is found that one of the earliest orders refers to church observance, and the method of enforcing the Act of Uniformity in Belfast at the origin of the Corporation.

“October 15, 1615. It was Ordered that every freeman and other inhabitant within the Corporation, of the age of eighteen years or above, that shall be absent from Church or other place appointed for common prayer upon the ‘Sabboth’ or any other day appointed to be kept holy by the Laws or Statutes of this Realm without reasonable cause, shall for every default forfeit to the use of the Corporation as followeth, vizt :—Every householder 5 shillings; every woman that is married 2 shillings and 6 pence; every servant man or woman one shilling; every child Ten pence, to be levied by distress by the churchwardens of the Parish of Shankhill out of the goods and chattels of every offender who is a householder; and all other forfeitures for the married women, servants, and children to be levied out of the goods of the husbands, fathers, mothers, and masters of the said offenders.”<sup>1</sup>

*History of Belfast* of 1823, had permission to examine it in the office of Mr. Verner, in whose possession it then was; but total inexperience, the inconvenience of examination in a frequented and public office, the illegible character of the writing, the circumstance that it had been bound without attention to consecutive dates or years, and which, even in its improved condition, is still the case, concurred in causing the examination of the volume to have been extremely imperfect. The cover, the leaves, the writing, were equally worn and dilapidated by age, constant use, and want of care. After this, the next time the Town Book is noticed is in the *Report of the Commissioners of Inquiry into the Condition of the Municipal Corporations in Ireland, 1833–34*, to whom it had to be submitted, who described it, and made from it a few extracts. It was then lost sight of. Many enquiries about it are in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology* and elsewhere, and efforts were made by influential persons for its recovery without effect. A few years ago renewed attempts were set on foot to find the volume, under the belief that full justice could not be done to the history of the town without it, which was probably at the same time estimating it too highly. At last the Marquis of Donegall himself found the book in the bottom of a chest in his own house, caused it to be rebound in London, and sent it to Belfast, where it now is in the safe custody of James Torrens, Esq., his lordship’s agent.

<sup>1</sup> The churchwardens were liable themselves to be mulcted in the sum of twenty shillings if neglecting to enforce the laws enjoined by the Act of Uniformity.

This method of making people religious by pains and penalties was held in favour by our town legislators, as several laws bearing on it were passed by them soon after, of which the following are examples:—

“October 2nd, 1617. It was Ordered that no person in this town shall, at any time of divine service, sell any manner of wine, ale, or aqua vitæ, or any thing vendible under a forfeiture to the town for every time committed of 6s. 8d.”

“At the same Assembly it was Ordered that every Burgess and Free Commoner in this town shall every Sabbath day, or other day wherein there shall be Sermon or other public prayer, repair to the House of the Sovereign, and shall show themselves in his company attending with him to the Church, and from thence home again or near to his house, upon pain of payment for every Burgess Two Shillings, and every Freeman Twelve Pence, unless some reasonable cause shall be shown to the contrary.”<sup>1</sup>

“At the same Assembly it was Ordered that every resident in the Town, whenever occasion may befall, for the credit and grace of the town, that the Sovereign shall give Notice, short or long, to accompany him to meet any Nobleman, Justice of Assize, either on horseback or

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It is needless to say that this attempt to produce sameness of faith by Acts of Parliament and Corporate Bye-Laws was the practice of the day, and common in other places as well as in Belfast; and how far the profitless endeavour was effectual here, or how much money was raised thereby, are not set down in our Records. The Bye-Law was copied from other Corporations, as there was no population in Belfast in 1615 to render it of any account. The Lord Deputy's attention to it *as a ruler* was not unknown. Considering the changed value of money, the above are very serious fines if enforced, which they may not have been; and they have appeared so large to persons who have copied or obtained access to this entry, that pence, halfpence, and farthings have been sometimes substituted for the shillings and half-crowns mentioned in it. The Records countenance the larger sums, though the smaller would have been more in accordance with the offence.

<sup>1</sup> The practice of the corporate body going in procession to church continued to a comparatively recent period, something in the fashion which the above bye-law expresses, and long after it had ceased to be compulsory. The writer was once told in his very early days by an old lady, a native of Belfast, that in her own youth she had seen the Sovereign and Burgesses proceeding in form and with due civic dignity through the street to attend divine service in the church in High Street.

on foot in the most decent sort, on pain of committal to prison ; or if a Burgess the fine of 20 shillings ; if a Freeman Ten Shillings."

"At the same Assembly it was also Ordered that all inhabitants were to be in readiness either for service of the King or good of the Town to apprehend Felons, Rogues, Wood Kerne, and 'crayghtes',<sup>1</sup> after due notice ; and if they did not, without fair and reasonable cause, they were liable to imprisonment at the Sovereign's pleasure ; or if a Burgess to be fined in the sum of Five Pounds ; if a Freeman 50 shillings."

"On 17th October 1616 it was Ordered that no person, free or foreigner, shall have admittance to sell Ale or other liquor within the Borough unless he be thought fitting for the same by the Sovereign ; and if any person sell Ale or other liquor without special License under the Sovereign's hand he shall pay a Fine of 3s. 3d. every time he has so offended."

These stringent and high-sounding rules are hardly reconcilable with the idea of Belfast at the very commencement of its corporate existence. They were all in imitation of those of Irish towns which could boast of some size and antiquity. Permission from the Sovereign or magistrate to sell "Ale or other liquor" appears to have been the precursor of the practice of modern times.

"At an Assembly held the 3rd of August 1632 it was decreed that all the Fines collected under Bye Laws and all Duties from Ships were to be given to the Sovereign to maintain his 'Hospetallity.'"

The Corporate body began with a fixed intention, or perhaps under an anticipation of future importance, to assert their dignity. A "settled course," as they term it, is agreed on in their very early days between the Right Hon. the Lord Viscount Chichester

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<sup>1</sup> The word "crayghtes" here is notable. Difference of opinion has arisen as to whether it describes the wandering mob and their cattle that roved about the country, settling down to consume the grass in favourable spots, or to the miserable huts erected in their temporary places of abode to serve them during their stay. The former meaning is that to be drawn from the above entry ; it applies there to individuals ; they were capable of arrest as well as felons and rogues ; but the inroad was certainly unusual as applied to such undesired intrans among the residents of a community settled in a town, however small.

and the Sovereign and Burgesses for "Government and regulating of the Market," which contains most strict and proper regulations for that purpose, and adapted for a much larger community than the very small population which the town then contained. Ring of bell announced the time for opening the proceedings of the day; the buyers and sellers are required to keep in one place and refrain from "scatteringe;" the orders and customs are not to extend to the Lord of the Castle, nor to "the Standings to be made about the walls of the Market House." Henry Le Squire signs this as "Soveraigne," which he was in 1632; but it proves a market house of some kind at this very early date, most probably adjoining the Castle Gate, where afterwards a better and more commodious building stood. The structure, it is probable, was only a temporary convenience put up by Lord Edward Chichester. Some of the market rules follow.

"1635. Through Tolls and Customs taken at the Gates<sup>1</sup> and Passages into the Town of Belfast for the use of the Sovereign for the time being.

"For every Horse load of Goods or merchandise being a Foreigner, or any Load of Timber, One Halfpenny.

"For every Wheel Car Load of Goods drawn by more beasts than one, for every beast, One Penny.

"For every Cart Load of Goods drawn by more beasts than one, for every beast One Halfpenny."

The expression "Cart Load" is curious, such vehicles in their ordinary meaning being rather modern.

"For every bull or bullock, ox, cow, or heifer brought into the Town or driven through the Town, being foreign, One Halfpenny; and for Horses or Mares driven through, One Halfpenny.

"Every Foreigner that slaughters or causes to be slaughtered any Cattle in the Town and Liberties of the same, all the Tongues of the said Cattle to be given to the Sovereign, to whom of ancient right and Custom they belong, or to pay Four pence sterl: for each Tongue at the discretion of the Sovereign.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gates into the town are here mentioned before any regular gates existed; they were probably extemporised for the occasion.

<sup>2</sup> This custom of giving a tongue to the Sovereign, valued then at fourpence,

“For every Standing Place or Standing set up in the Market Place or Streets in Belfast Town by any Person whatsoever to sell or retail any Goods or Merchandise shall pay for such Place or Standing—every Pedlar or Gray Merchant Two Pence Sterl: and every other Person One Penny.

“Out of every Sack of Meal sold in the Town of Belfast, by Retail or Wholesale, one Standard Quart dish full.

“Out of every Barrel of Wheat, Rye, Masslin, Barley, Pease, Beans, and Oats, one Quart dish full as aforesaid.”

“All Vessels or Ships loaden with Coals or part, to pay half a Barrel of Coals to the Sergeants.

“Out of every Sack of Turf to take two Turfs for Custom.”

The above regulations were renewed at intervals. At their repetition in 1666 it is said, “The aforesaid Table of Fees are the whole Fees taken in the Borough of Belfast, and also all the Petty Customs and Through Tolls taken at the Gates and Market of the Town, a Copy whereof was sent up to the Parliament of Dublin the 5th February 1666 by Edward Reynell Sovereign and were approved and confirmed.” These tolls and customs, under sundry modifications and changes, continued till a late time, and caused some disputes and litigation. They died with the old Corporation or before it.

“1640. The Customs collected on Cattle coming into the Town this year amounted to Two Pounds Five Shillings.”<sup>1</sup>

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met with some little opposition. Even before this time, though the exact date is somewhat illegible, but is apparently 1632, it was recorded “that whereas it manifestly appears by good testimony of the ancient Burgesses that at the first Court held after the raising of this Corporation it was agreed that every Butcher being a Freeman of this town should pay unto the Sovereign one Tongue weekly if he should kill any Bullock or Cow, and in confirmation and better strengthening thereof we do make a Bye Law that from henceforth every butcher within the Corporation shall pay unto the Sovereign one Tongue weekly so long as he shall kill to his use any Bullock.” But notwithstanding this, four contumacious fleshers—and it is rather a proof of prosperity that the town required four in 1635—refused to give these choice morsels of their slaughtered beasts, whereupon, “on the last day of the month John Washer the Sovereign awarded them to pay a fine of Twenty Shillings each, and one Tongue weekly for the future.” The freemen were favoured in this matter, as by the very next regulation, which it is unnecessary to repeat, every freeman butcher was required to give but one tongue in the week though “killing one or *more* Cattle for Sale.”

“Memorandum: that the Customs of Cattle passing through the Town is set to Farm to Thomas Postely and Phelimy Coshnan for the Rent of Forty Shillings Sterling per annum to be paid by them or either of them half yearly on Lady Day and Michaelmas, for and during the term of three years.”<sup>2</sup>

“Upon the humble Petition of Roger Robyns at an Assembly held 24th September 1640 it was agreed that the said Roger Robyns shall be Town Clerk<sup>3</sup> of the Borough of Belfast during his good demeanour and the pleasure of the Sovereign and Burgesses for the time being, he only taking the Fees allowed by the Table of Fees.”

“It was Ordered by the Sovereign and Burgesses that the Attorney shall take for his Pleading only Twelve Pence Fees at his first retaining, and Twelve Pence every Court Day after, so long as the Action remains in the Court undecided.”

The following orders occur so early as 1635, but were, like others, renewed at intervals by way of reminder to the inhabitants.

“All Lands and Houses to be properly Fenced within the precincts of the Corporation, under the Penalty of Five Shillings.”

“No Horses, Garrans, Cows, Swine, or Geese permitted to be at large on streets or Highways under the Penalty of Ten Shillings.”

“No one to make Dunghills to continue longer than three days in the open street before his Door, or throw Carrion, Dyeing Stuff, or any loathsome thing into the River under the Penalty of Five Shillings.”

This will of course be understood as the river in High Street, and behind Mill Street and Castle Street, the main water-supply of the inhabitants, and then a clear, open, and, as far as possible, an unpolluted stream.

The higher offices of the Corporation were not much prized in its youthful days. There is an order in 1627 making it known that certain persons appointed to be Burgesses take no part in the affairs of the Corporation, causing the burden for the “moste p<sup>te</sup> to be laid upon the weake and disabilit Inhabitants.” On

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<sup>1</sup> *Joy's MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> John Haddock, a burgess, signs rude initials to this agreement, though his Christian name is written before and his surname after the initials.

<sup>3</sup> This is the earliest notice discoverable in the Records of a Town Clerk, so we may conclude that Mr. Robyns was the first who held the office.



the margin there is expressed, "Order ag<sup>st</sup> such as refuse the Office of Sovereigne;" from all which it is obvious that those on whom such duties naturally devolved shrank from their performance. A fine of £5 was in consequence imposed. There is a pen drawn through this order, the motive for which cannot now be known.

The duties may have been at first rather trying. The Sovereign was a sort of bailiff or sheriff, or at least exercised powers now belonging to these officers. At the time there was an unwillingness to accept the dignity, the Sovereign was empowered to call on the inhabitants under a penalty to attend him "within the Boundes of the Towne, being about Three Myles by a *direct Lynne*<sup>1</sup> to make any lawful seizure of goods or merchandize sould without leave or Lychense granted by the Lord Chichester." The supremacy of the Lord of the Castle over the few inhabitants scattered over considerable limits was undoubted, and, we may suppose, unquestioned.

"29th March 1638. Forasmuch as by daily experience it is found that 'Malt Kills' erected in the body of the Town are very dangerous and *enormious*, and may upon the least accident endanger the whole Town to be consumed by Fire, it is therefore ordered and established by the Sovereign and Burgesses assembled, by and with the consent of the Right Hon. Edward Lord Viscount Chichester, Lord of the Castle of Belfast, as a Bye Law perpetually to remain—That from henceforth no person or persons inhabiting within the Borough of Belfast shall erect, or make use of any Malt Kill already erected and built within the said Borough, but in such convenient place as shall be allowed by the Lord of the Castle and the Sovereign of the Borough for the time being, together with six of the Burgesses at the least, upon pain of forfeiture of Five Pounds for every Default to be levied, that be presented."

"Forasmuch as it is found that dayly inconveniencies are likely to arise to this Town and Borough by reason of their Wood Chimney it is therefore thought fit and so Ordered that the said Chimneys shall be forthwith pulled down, and Brick Chimneys made instead thereof,

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<sup>1</sup> These two words are very indistinct, but without them, or even with them, the town bounds are most imperfectly described.

upon pain of forfeiture on every person that maketh Default the sum of Forty Shillings, there to be levied as aforesaid.”<sup>1</sup>

“1640, January 17th. The information of Henry Sands, *gent*, taken the day and year aforesaid before the Sovereign and Burgesses, who sayeth that about the middle of October last Robert Kile of Irvine merchant brought into this Town Ten Hogsheads and Fourteen Barrels of white Salt, and Twelve Firkins of Soap and Two Bottles (? barrels) of Aqua Vitæ, the said Salt being offered to the Town to buy at the rate of 7s. 3d. a Barrel, but the Town refused the same at that rate, and hereupon the said Robert Kile sold the said salt to John Gurley of Armagh within this Corporation for 7 shillings a Barrel and 3s. 6d. upon the steere (?) and the Barrel again. And the said Gurley hath taken away 19 Barrels of the said salt, the residue of the said salt being five hogsheads and a barrel he the said Henry Sands hath seized on to the use of the town as being foreign bought and foreign sold ; the rest of the commodities he sold some to the town and some to strangers. It is therefore Ordered by the Sovereign and Burgesses then assembled that the said Robert Kile shall pay for and in consideration of the aforesaid salt the price of one barrel of salt, or a barrel of salt itself, to be disposed of to the use of the Town and Borough of Belfast.”

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<sup>1</sup> These two very remarkable orders should excite some notice. The wooden chimneys would prove that dwellings of a very inconsiderable kind were in the town, and the chief, perhaps it would be more correct to say the entire, number had “wood chimneys.” Wooden chimneys, and also chimneys of strongly-matted straw bound with hoops, may still be seen in poor districts in Ireland. The strong expression “enormious,” applied to malt kilns, would prove that beer-drinking had made some progress among the community. The two orders combined lead to the conclusion that fires were frequent in the town. The wooden chimneys, but still more the very defective mode of drying grain, must have rendered this almost inevitable. Grain in country places in Ireland, down to the latter end of the last century, was dried on kilns constructed of wooden ribs elevated so far above the fire as was consistent with safety, but at the same time as near as was at all effective for the required purpose. Over these ribs was a layer of straw, on which the grain was placed to be acted on by the fire underneath ; then, as improvement proceeded, a covering of cloth of some kind was substituted for the straw, and finally a hair cloth. Grain or malt deposited in this dangerous fashion was doubtless the rude and primitive manner of drying followed by the Belfast kilnmen in the old time.

The orders about the “Kills” and the wooden chimneys are signed by Edward Chichester, Henry Le Squire, John Leithes, and John Asshe ; and these signatures, together with those of Robert Foster, John Haddock, Thomas Theaker, and John Washer, are attached to many orders for a few years. They were the Sovereigns, acting Burgesses, and Lord of the Castle.

On the 8th February, 1641, Sands again informs the Corporation that "on the 20th November last one John Warren brought into the town thirteen barrels of salt, and being not free of the Corporation exposed the same to sale to a Mr. Gold, a non-freeman also, contrary to the Bye Laws of the Borough." The Sovereign and Burgesses then at once asserted their dignity and fined Mr. John Warren in the sum of Forty Shillings.

This was exclusive dealing, and was the general and approved practice of the age. The corporate body of Belfast would not abate their privileges, but desired by every means to enforce them, thinking that their maintenance tended both to public and private benefit; the freemen possessed advantages not accorded to aliens. The entries afford an idea of the value of salt when there was perhaps none made in Ireland, as well as the trade regulations of the day.

"1639. Thomas Postelay and Phelimy Coshnan were chosen Sergeants of Belfast."

These were the Sergeants-at-Mace, and are the earliest noticed in the Records as being appointed to that office. They were the same two persons who farmed the customs on cattle brought into the town—or, as it is expressed, passing through it—for the heavy yearly tribute of Forty Shillings.

The appointment of Sovereign is occasionally accompanied with some explanatory observations in the Records, not to mention personal disagreements, which will be inserted as they occur. Thus the minute attaching to the name of the Sovereign of 1632 is in these words:—

"Robert Foster gent. one of the Burgesses of Belfast was the xxix daie of September Anno Dni 1632 sworne in the office of a Sovereigne for the Burrough aforesaid before John Wassher<sup>1</sup> gentleman, Constable

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<sup>1</sup> The name of John Washer here occurs as Sovereign. No such person appears in any list of Sovereigns hitherto published, though, by another notice connected with the butchers, it is clearly proved that he did occupy that office. Washer was in reality Seneschal to Lord Edward Chichester, and officiated here as his Deputy-Constable of the Castle. He was probably one of the more intimate

of the Castle for the tyme beinge, and so continewe in the said Office for one whole yeere from theance next ensewinge."

Edward Holmes, Sovereign in 1628, bequeathed Forty Pounds to the poor of Belfast, "the first money ever left to them in that kinde."<sup>1</sup>

"1639. A Rate was made this year and agreed upon by the Sovereign and Burgesses for the fitting up of a Town Hall with partitions, bench, bar, and other necessities for the use of the Court."

This is the first notice of a Town Hall and its appliances which the Corporate Records contain, and in 1639 it could have been a place but commensurate with the diminutive town. The Records mention that forty-five persons only were assessed as able to pay for this most necessary appendage to corporate dignity. Henry Le Squire was active in originating this first Town Hall, but the entire sum collected from the forty-five individuals for this purpose is illegible.

Though no direct allusion to the rebellion of 1641 is in the Records, the evidence of disturbance in the country is from them sufficiently apparent. The history has already related the defenceless condition of the town at the commencement of the rebellion, and the general measures resorted to; some of the particular proceedings are collected from the Records, as thus:—

"24 June 1642. It is agreed that Twenty Loads of Turf shall be allowed to the Main Guard and Bye Guards every week for the space of half a year, which comes to 640 Loads<sup>2</sup> of Turf at 4 pence a load

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dependants of the Chichester family, and may have come to Ireland with them. There has been hitherto a John Walker represented as Sovereign in 1637, but there is little doubt that Washer is the correct name.

<sup>1</sup> Having examined a great number of the wills of Belfast people, it may be mentioned that the custom of leaving money to the poor of the town was very general. The sums in most cases were but small; still the practice exhibited a charitable feeling among the early inhabitants. Allusions to what was in 1628 the considerable sum bequeathed by Edward Holmes—to its being the first money ever left to the poor of Belfast—and its application, occur occasionally in town documents.

<sup>2</sup> There is an inaccuracy of calculation here, but not materially affecting the general view of the position of affairs.

which comes to £10 13 4 to which is to be added 2 Barrels of Sea Coals every week for the same time which comes to 8 tons at £4 16 0. In all for Firing £15 10 0. This is to be made by an equal applotment on every inhabitant within the Town and Libties thereof to be brought in in Coals and Turf before Lammas Day next, or in default thereof money to be levied and their pawns taken up for it. It is also desired that Col. Chichester will be pleased to give order that every company may bring in firing for their Captains and Officers and not to charge the Town with that particular."

"It is Agreed that the Sovereign shall bring in a list of the men that are to be of the Train of the Town on Thursday next, and that they be then enrolled as Soldiers. And it is humbly desired that Colonel Chichester will supply the said Soldiers with Arms, so many as shall be wanting to be delivered to them, and an Indenture to be made and signed between them, the said Col., and the said Sovereign, to the end the men and arms may go together from Sovereign to Sovereign, who is to do his best endeavour for the preservation of the said Arms."

"It is Agreed that the work at the Bridge shall be finished at the charge of the Lord Chichester who hath begun it, the which his Lordship's Officers have undertook to do."<sup>1</sup>

"It is Agreed that for the finishing of the Rampier about the Town all such as have not paid their former Rates shall presently pay them or be distrained for them. And that for a further addition to that work the L<sup>d</sup> Chichester's Officers in his Lopp<sup>s</sup> behalf are content to make the Drawbridge and Palisadoes, and the Town is content to give a thousand days' work with a man, and it is desired in a further addition to so necessary a work that Col. Chichester will take order that each Company of his Regiment may work three score days to the said work, and that he will appoint their several officers to see them perform it. And also to take Order that as many Soldiers as the Town or other shall employ about the said work may work for Three pence

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<sup>1</sup> Whether this means the Great Bridge, or embankment rather, over the Owen Varra, or modern Blackstaff, or a structure more closely allied to the defences of the town, cannot be said. From another quarter this information is obtained of bridges. "1642. Sluice Bridge built at the expense of Ld. Chichester; and inhabitants formed into Train Bands." "1642. This year the officers of Ld. Chichester's Reg<sup>t</sup> consented to make the Drawbridge and Pallisadoes." Both extracts, though indefinite, are, so far as they go, corroborative of the Records. (*MSS. of the late Samuel M'Skimin.*)

a day ready money, and that the said day's work shall be apploited on Thursday next as the Firing is."<sup>1</sup>

"It is also Agreed that such as have not paid their former assessments for candles to Guards shall forthwith pay the same or be distrained for it. And that there shall be money plotted for 8 score pounds of candles against the next winter."

"It is Agreed that Mr. John Ash and Nicholas Garnet shall have full power to levy money or work within the Town and Lib<sup>s</sup> thereof, viz., from the Mile Water to the Gardner's House in Malone as the work shall require, whereof they are to give an estimate on Thursday next."

"All these orders aforesaid were agreed upon by us at a meeting for the whole Town on the 21st day of June 1642."

"The same year (1642) an assessment of £20 was laid on the inhabitants for fire and candle to the Garrison; it was paid by 150 persons but being insufficient for the intended purpose on the 30th January following a sum of £15 7 0 additional was also levied; and in March £30 more to make a Bulwark in the Strand to keep off the Tide."<sup>2</sup>

This last item is much more explicitly and correctly told in the Records. The subscriptions for indispensable work were inadequate, and seeing this, in March, 1642, it was "resolved by the Sovereign and Burgesses, whose names are hereunto subscribed, that to carry out a 'Plott' by them laid down for the making and building of a Bullwoorke at the Stronde side near the House late Bryan M'Lovvry's (or M'Corry's) £30 more would be required, wherepon the said Sovereign and Burgesses, 13 in number, contribute £2 10 0 each to finish the work." These were the principal men in the town, being the Sovereign

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<sup>1</sup> This was the rampart or defence encompassing the town, and the time and manner of its construction,—the time, a few months after the rebellion broke out; and the manner, by the joint labour of the soldiers and the inhabitants. It is a pity we have no account of the meeting on the Thursday when Mr. Ash and Mr. Garnet were to hand in their report. That there had been some disturbance about this time is perhaps to be inferred from this obscurely-worded order in 1642, though the Records take no notice of such :—"It is agreed that money shall be given to some man out of the *longe* (?) moneys for the Town to bury all the carrion within the Town and Libties thereof."

<sup>2</sup> MS., Trinity College, Dublin, quoted and referred to by Samuel M'Skimin in his notes, in possession of the Rev. Classon Porter, of Larne.



and Burgesses or Corporate body in 1642, though if each subscribed the sum named the entire would a little exceed the required amount. Their names were—

THOMAS STEPHENSON, *Sovereign*.

HENRY LE SQUIRE.

JOHN ASH.

ROBERT FOSTER.

JOHN LEYTHES.

THOMAS THEAKER.

THOMAS HARRINGTON.

JOHN HAYDOCK.

RICHARD CHATELEY.

JOHN DAVYES.

JOHN MITCHELL.

WILLIAM LEYTHES.

WALTERHOUSE CRYMBLE.

There is an assessment on 13th May, 1643, in which no less than 245 names appear. Some few paid so much as fourteen shillings each. The town raised £50 on this occasion for their defence, which was being made at this time with great vigour. This particular meeting is said to be of "the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commonality." All were equally interested in the measures in progress, and it is probable some of the 245 contributors were of those who had taken refuge in the town. Part of this money was expended on "Highways," it may be conjectured, in or near to Belfast.

While Colonel Chichester, his fellow officers, and the townspeople had under their own control the care of Belfast, there was general harmony of action; but in the early part of 1644, when, as already related, the Scotch under Monro surprised and took possession of it, the situation was altered. It is strange that the Records make no mention of that "treacherous surprisal," so unexpected and eventful, but indirectly its results appear in entries consequent on it. Monro and Colonel Hume, chiefly the latter, but both of whom so dexterously eluded the demands of

the English Parliament to relinquish Belfast, now rise up within it in their authoritative relations, one of the first of which is described as—

“Money Disbursed by Mr. William Leythes Sovereign for several Uses and Services for the Town, as followeth,

“Imprimis. Two Ton of Coals for the Colonel Hume at					
	10s. 8d. the Ton	...	...	...	1 1 4
	More for Two Ton of Coals for him	...			18 0
“Item.	One Ton of Coals for Lt Col. Maxwell...	...			8 0
“Item. For making up the Hedge at the Guard to keep					
	up the Rampier	...	...	...	18 8
	For mending the way to the Strand	...	...		8 8
	For mending the Guards	...	...	...	5 6
“Item. Laid down for present Payment of the Butter					
	which the Officers had when they went to the				
	Field	...	...	...	6 6
“Item. Laid down to make up the pay for Donell Munro,					
	his Troop	...	...	...	13 2
“Item.	Laid out for Shingle to mend the Church	...			5 0
“Item. Laid out to make up the money for the Officers					
	in the late Cess	...	...	...	5 8
“Item. For Forty six feet of Boards to mend the Colonel's					
	Windows, and 300 Nails and workmanship				6 7
“Item. For the common charge of Soldiers Cesses in					
	five Houses for the cessing of the Officers	...			1 3 4
Sum Total					7 0 5

The Sovereign advanced this “Sum Total” to meet the emergency. Larger demands ensued, according to this entry from a different authority—

“1644. £23 5 10 levied off the inhabitants for making dams for water to fill the trenches round the Town. Great scarcity of provisions. The inhabitants had to send to Carrickfergus for what they wanted, and employed boats and horses at £60 (?) per month to do so. Col. Muir's Troop, and Col. Hume's Regiment quartered here besides many other Troops.<sup>1</sup> From the civil wars and the destruction

<sup>1</sup> Joy's MSS.

which the Papists made upon the Ramparts and Gates of the Town<sup>1</sup> the Corporation were obliged to make a weighty assessment on the Inhabitants for repairs which were done and the Town again sufficiently strengthened."

This is confirmed partially by the Records, showing how small the scale on which everything was—how limited the means of the Board of Works of 1644. This is the almost illegible record—

"1st Maie 1644. An Assessment for £15 2 2" (some words illegible) "which is due unto me William Leythes" (some words illegible) "for Six Days Provant to the army when they were out at the Leaguer; for Thirty Six Shillings which is due unto the Sovereign and Widow Partridge; for Bricks for the Court of Guard and for Iron Works for the Gates, and for the making of the Bridges at the Gates, and for the work which is now in workinge about the Rampier."

Some points in this assessment are omitted from their indistinctness.

- "1645. 10th July. Cess. 400 of Col. Hume's Soldiers 15 pounds of meal a man for 10 days.
- „ 21st July. 400 men on Guard: to this Joe. Mc el Roy an Irishman in Mr. Ash's work. 2 Soldiers.<sup>2</sup>
- „ 11th August. Cess for 400 at 15 pounds of Meal, or 4 pence in money.<sup>3</sup>
- „ 28th August. A Cess of £11 12 4 for bringing Bisket, butter, and cheese from Carrickfergus.
- „ 25th October. For 2 Boats of Provisions from Carrick, a horse to Kilwarlin, 4 Horses to Eden Carrick, and for mowing the Grass about the Rampier, £2 16 0.
- „ 1st November. Cess of £42 imposed upon the inhabitants of Belfast for supply of the Officers of Col. Hume's Regiment."

There are many more such entries as these in the Book of

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<sup>1</sup> *Joy's MSS.* This is inexplicable, and is most probably a misstatement. There is no account, in the Records at least, of the "Papists," immediately before Monro's occupation, having attacked the town, or injured its defences.

<sup>2</sup> Copied as nearly as possible to the words written, but it is unintelligible.

<sup>3</sup> This seems to be an error, as in some of the numerous cesses fourteen pence in money was accepted as equivalent to fifteen pounds of meal.

Records, all which proving so burdensome, a petition was presented by the inhabitants of the town to the Governor praying for relief, and proposing that such should be effected by means rather indirect.

“The Humble Petition of all the Inhabitants of the Town of Belfast, Tenants unto the Right Hon. Edward Lord Viscount Chichester—To the Right Hon. Colonel Hume Governor of the Town and Castle of Belfast, Humbly Sheweth unto your Honour, that Mr. Walcot the chief agent for the said Lord Viscount Chichester within the Barony of Belfast obtained an order from General Leslie, and also another order from the General Major Munro for the taking up of the Rents of each Tenant of the said Lord within the said Barony by virtue whereof he hath duly received the said Rents ever since. And now they will have a half year’s Rent to pay at 1st November next. Your Humble Petitioners therefore in manifesting their duty and Service unto your Honour and for the supply of your Honour’s Officers for the present, are and will be willing to pay the said half year’s rent unto your Honour for the said supply, if your Honour would be pleased to procuring an Order from the General Major whereby your humble petitioners may be secured and discharged, and also guard harmless from the said Lord Viscount Chichester, his assigns and agents whatsoever, in paying their said Rents unto your Honour.

“WILLIAM LEYTHES, *Sovereign*,  
and others.”

This petition is in very subdued and humble language, and manifests the exercise of unexpected influence by the Scottish commanders. The word Barony is used twice in it; perhaps Borough is meant. It proves in either case that Lord Chichester’s estate was not in his own power, but that Mr. Walcot had up to this time still received the rents, by the sanction of Generals Leslie and Monro. The tenants, or the people of the town at least, virtually desired by their application that Lord Chichester should pay their cesses. The result of this proposal to appropriate the rents is not disclosed. Let it have been successful or not, the demands on the inhabitants did not to all appearance diminish. Fifteen pounds of meal for each soldier of Colonel Hume’s regiment, consisting of 400 men, had to be procured

every ten days, besides support for a small number of "cannoniers" occasionally, for about half-a-dozen of horsemen who required, "by the General Major's order," twelve shillings and three bushels of oats monthly for each, and the maintenance of the officers, and "for other occasions for the Town's service," all which must have sadly taxed the slender means of the inhabitants. The extent of the cesses beyond the town is at the same time indefinite, and no doubt contributions from the country districts were required and obtained to lighten the burden. This order of 17th October, 1645, though obscurely expressed, cannot but apply to this point:—

"Whereas it was formerly granted that the inhabitants at Mr. Ash his Trench should contribute with Malone in all Cesses for the Town for one year, and now that the year is ended it is thought expedient, and so ordered by the Sovereign and Burgesses, together with the Commonalty of the Borough and Town of Belfast aforesaid now assembled, that the said Inhabitants at the said Trench shall contribute no further with the said Malone, but with the said Town of Belfast, as formerly hath been done."

It is difficult to conceive how all the demands upon the inhabitants of this poor town for the support of the military during those years were met. Repeated pages in the Book of Records are filled with the names of "such as were assessed and what they have paid of the same." The payers appear in many columns, interspersed with such descriptive designations as "the Smyth in Hogg's Lane;" "the Butcher next unto Meads;" "the mealeman in Mr. Boltby's shop, or Mr. Harrington's shop." Many of those assessed are short in their payments, sixpence or fourpence being sometimes marked instead of the two or three shillings at which they were originally rated. Some are "Souldiours," who could not be compelled to pay, and some inhabitants were not able to pay. This caused the deficiency to be made good by about fifteen or sixteen persons who composed, during the civil wars, the rich men of the town, most of them the same as those described as burgesses in 1642, with the addition of Walcot, Waring, Doak, and two or three more. On several

occasions Thomas Walcot pays twenty shillings for the Lord Chichester—an unwilling contribution, it is to be supposed.

Though the people of Belfast were suffering so much from exactions and cesses, the municipal body was not free from internal dissensions. The usual oaths were taken by those entering on office, but either from political or other causes a want of union is discernible, the following curious illustration of which is in the Town Records, and to which publicity is here given, reduced to a readable shape, but with all the correctness the old and illegible writing will permit:—"By Francis Meeke<sup>1</sup> Constable of the Castle in the absence of Edward Lord Chichester, William Leathes was presented and elected on the 24th June 1645." The minute of his election is "certified" (?) by the then Sovereign, Robert Foster, but the names of the Constable of the Castle and Burgesses are all in the same handwriting. To the name of John Ash, the second on the list, there is a memorandum written and signed by him to this effect—"Whose name and . . . was written hereunto without any consent of mine, witness my hand, John Asshe." A pen has been drawn through these words, and the following note is written in another hand:—"This writing above defaced, was found to be indiscreetly written by Mr. Ash, and therefore ordered to be erased by the Sovereign and Burgesses." On the same page there is a minute of the manner in which Mr. Leathes was sworn, and which so much roused the indignation of the recusant Burgess—"Sworn in within the Castle of Belfast before Major Coughran Commander in Chief there and from him did receive the Staff." But opposition to what he believed to be an irregular proceeding was not abandoned by Mr. Ash, as in the margin he writes—"This Oath

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<sup>1</sup> This person is generally styled Captain Francis Meeke, and he was most probably, from his appointment as Constable of the Castle, in the Chichester interest. He was Sovereign at the Restoration, and seems to have been an important man. From his office and position the perusal of his will was looked forward to with much interest, but it proved to be entirely meagre and destitute of any point; so poor, indeed, that one is almost inclined to think he had fallen from his high estate. He lived in Malone; the will is dated 1664; his property seems to have been all but *nil*, but he leaves forty shillings to the poor of Belfast.



was given by Major Coughran contrary to our Charter and Improperly taken by Mr. Leathes." The opposing party, not to be outdone, caused this writing to be crossed out also, adding these words—"This writing of Mr. Ash ordered to be rased by the Sovereign and Burgesses.—HD." Asshe, as he spells his name, appears to have got the worst of the controversy. Political feeling was probably as intense in 1647 as it has been in subsequent times, and may have been the moving cause in these corporate dissensions. Mr. Ash contended for a strictness of observance to the charter no longer practicable when the Scotch commander ruled the town, but the other members of the Corporation were disposed to bend to the storm.

The Corporation of Belfast, even when impoverished and almost subjected to military oppression, endeavoured to uphold their dignity, as two entries prove. They are of different years, but to the same tendency.

"At the Court holden 4th March 1647 it appears John Stewart Merchant of Belfast assaulted Thomas Harrington one of the Burgesses, beat him in the open street, and most scandalously abused him, by calling him perjured knave. The Sovereign issued a warrant to arrest him. Stewart asked to see the warrant, and having read it, in a most contemptuous manner and against his oath, he being sworn a free commoner, tore the said warrant, and did throw it into the fire, and would not obey the constable at all. Another warrant was issued for the original offence and for the subsequent contempt. Stewart asked to see it, and the constable no wiser than before gave it to him; he put it in his pocket and would not obey the constable at all. At this Court the Sovereign and Burgesses disfranchised Stewart of the Privileges and Liberties of the Corporation."

Two Burgesses sign this document by mark.

"On the 8th of April 1647 John Stewart acknowledged his offence, and submitted himself to the Bench, and upon serious consideration the Sovereign and Burgesses remitted the offence, and admitted him to be a free stapler and free commoner according to the ancient liberties, privileges, and franchises of the said Town.

"Signed HD."

John Stewart was probably not the first refractory freeman in times when disturbers may have imagined the civil power was helpless in the presence of the military, as in 1645 a most stringent regulation had been made for the punishment of all who "by act or deed or by any malignant or contemptuous words abuse and disobey the Sovereign and Burgesses or any of them, or any person or persons which shall be lawfully put in authority. They shall suffer imprisonment until they submit themselves by humble petition to the Bench, and shall forthwith pay such Fines and farther imprisonment as by the Sovereign and Burgesses shall be legally ordered and disposed." This order met the case of John Stewart, and for what reason he escaped from its effects is nowhere stated, the debate in the council on his fate not being "reported" in the Town Book.

"16th October 1645. At a council held this day the Sovereign, Burgesses and Commonalty ordered that Rich<sup>d</sup> Stafford being appointed Sexton for the Church of Belfast shall receive for his yearly Stipend of every Householder, and other person following a trade or occupation though he be a single man and no householder, 4 pence sterling yearly during the time he continues in office; and shall receive for every burial at the said parish church 4 pence for making the grave; the said Rich<sup>d</sup> Stafford taking a diligent care and charge for the keeping of the Church and Church Yard in decent order."

This of course refers to the old church and churchyard in High Street. An order concerning the same, in November, 1647, is inserted in the Records, and is expressive of the condition of the town and some of its church interests.

"It is ordered and thought fitting and convenient for the decency in placing of the Burgesses in the Church at the assembling of the congregation for the public worship of God, either upon the Lord's day or any other day appointed, that the two seats which heretofore were allotted and set apart for the Burgesses for their ease next adjacent to the Sovereign's seat, because that there is a greater concourse or assembly of the people now for the present by reason of the two regiments remaining in this Town, one of the said Seats during these times may be very well reserved and kept for the said Burgesses notwithstanding the great assembly: It is therefore ordered that one of the seats shall be con-

stantly kept and reserved for the Burgesses from time to time, and that no person or persons whatsoever, either foreigner or free commoner, shall be admitted into the said seat from henceforth, which, if any do contrary to this order they shall pay twelve pence a piece for every offence, which twelve pence shall go towards the repairing of the church. And after, when it may please God to give a more peaceable time amongst us and that the parish may be eased of the multitude of officers and souldiours which are amongst us, that then the two seats shall be solely to and for the ease and seats of the Burgesses and no other."

"HD" is the signature to this, meaning, where it occurs, Hugh Doak; and the entry proves with what persistence the Corporation still endeavoured to preserve their supremacy, though surrounded by so many privations.

"1647. Richard Wall was Town Clerk; 'a man honest, discreet, and learned in the law.'"

Thomas Postely and Phelimy Coshnan were still the Sergeants, and apparently, from the disturbed times, rather important persons.

"1649. George Martin was sworn into the Office of Sovereign within the Castle before Francis Meeke in the absence of Lord Viscount Chichester, but by authority and order from Colonel Robert Venables Commander in chief of these parts when the King's party was expelled and beaten; but the said George Martin never kept Court in all that year."

"1650. Thomas Harrington was sworn as Sovereign before Francis Meeke in the absence of Lord Chichester, but by authority and order from Colonel Robert Venables."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The following entry is in the Historical Collections relative to Belfast, p. 50:—"April 10, 1649. Compeared Mr. Foster Sovereign of Belfast and was rebuked for fencing (*i.e.*, *holding*) the Courts without mentioning of the King's name, contrary to the *Covenant*, who promised to amend the same in time coming." This entry is not in the Records. It proceeded from the spiritual guides of Mr. Foster, according to the authority from which it was taken, namely, *Presbyterian Loyalty*, p. 287; but that work makes the date of this rebuke April 10, 1646 instead of 1649. The latter date, however, appears at the beginning of the article in a general statement of proceedings, and Foster was Sovereign in 1648, but not in 1649. Reference is also made to Records by Dr. Kirkpatrick, but it was their own Presbyterian, not the Town Records.

The two last notices indicate into what hands the authority had now fallen. The party in power, to strengthen their position, appear to have erected, among their earliest proceedings, the "Grand Fort," the discovery of the situation of which has always been a difficulty. The most probable opinion is that it refers to the Church, which had been converted into a citadel, as shown in the general history of the town; but as the church may be presumed to have stood detached and unconnected with any other buildings, this would hardly correspond with several accounts preserved in the Corporate Records of persons acknowledging the receipt of sums of money for the pulling down of their houses to erect the Grand Fort. One of these is for £12 by a person "for giving up his house to the use of the State;" others for various sums down to fifteen shillings, all the recipients acknowledging the payments by mark. Still the Church would appear the most likely to have been the Grand Fort till evidence to the contrary be found.

The inhabitants of the town were not long in bringing their impoverished condition before those who now had authority over them, and the following correspondence on the subject is in the Records :—

"Petition of the Sovereign, Burgesses, and inhabitants of Belfast to the Right Hon. the Lord President with the rest of the Honble. Commissioners of the Revenue for the Province of Ulster—Humbly shewing unto your Honours that by reason of your Suppliants so great and heavy burdens we supplicated your Honours at Coleraine when you met there last, hoping for some ease or relief, as we still do, but as yet have had none, which enforceth us your Suppliants to acquaint your Honours that we reaped small benefit by the Honble. Colonel Venables's Order. And now of late there is fallen defects and no ways able to make payment of their monthly assessments, the number of eight or ten which paid monthly the sum of Five Pounds the which being summed unto our former defects make up near Thirty Pounds monthly, all which being added to your Petitioners' Cesses enforceth this their Supplication. May it therefore please your Honours, in tender consideration of their deplorable condition, as to take away part of their monthly cesses, or help your supplicants by adding some other quarter to be their assistants, so by adding unto them some 'custodred'

(? custodiam) lands and tithes, whereby they with their poor families may not be totally ruined."

This ill-worded petition gives a melancholy representation of the town of Belfast in the middle of the 17th century. It was not unattended to, and produced results which are partly explained in the following correspondence. No precise date is attached to the papers on this subject, that being a point in which the Town Book is very defective, but they are all in the same connection.

"Mr. Gray (?) O'Hara is hereby Ordered to pay unto the Petitioners the Twenty Two Pounds which he is to pay per ann. towards the easing of their contributions, and if the Commissioners can find any other way to their advantage and not to the public Revenue's prejudice it shall be granted them.

"CHAS COOTE, RO. VENABLES, CHIDLEY COOTE."

"Whereas Mr. Crage (*sic*) desires to be freed from paying or contributing any thing with the protected people in the Barony of Loughinsolin but to reside in the County of Antrim and be a distinct *Creat* by himself. We are very well content therewith, provided he pay Five Pounds Ten Shillings quarterly, or more if it comes to his proportion, of what is contracted with the said protected persons. Which sum of £5 10 0 he is to pay unto the Sovereign of Belfast towards their help in the Cess contributed off that Town.

"CHA. COOTE, R. VENABLES, CHIDLEY COOTE, ROB. BARON."

"Received by the Sovereign, by virtue of the Order aforementioned, from Teag O'Hara for the first Quarter since the said Order, the sum of £5 10 0 and disbursed by him as followeth,

"Imprimis. To Mr. William Leythes for several employ-		
ments and disbursements of money which		
he had about the works of this Town '...		£3 0 0
"Item.	Paid to Mr. Theaker for quarters for Mr. Shamba	
	for 3 months, 12s the month, ended June 1651	1 16 0
"Item.	To Jackson's son for mending the Strand way	
	over the water ... ..	9 0
		<hr/>
		£5 5 0

"Remaining in the Sovereign's hands Five Shillings."

These are very petty matters even in 1651, and unless the Commissioners in their liberality greatly exceeded the subsidiary

grants here expressed, the pressing necessities of the town could not have been much alleviated. One of the clauses of the oath of the Sovereign now was, "you shall acknowledge the power and authority of the Parliament of England, and Government by States to be just, honourable, and lawful, and shall to the uttermost of your power maintain and uphold all the rights, liberties, and privileges of the same." It is a long document, firmly and wisely expressed, and followed by the oaths of the officers of the Corporation.

No entries of any interest occur now for a long period. The admission of freemen, the appointments of Sovereigns and Burgesses, form the substance of the book, with a most singular absence of reference to any private or domestic events, to the trade of the town, or the public affairs of the country. Names, afterwards to be known as the most important in Belfast, now first appear in the Records. Thus: "Nov<sup>r</sup> 13<sup>th</sup> 1656. George Mc'Cartney surnamed Niger, merchant, was admitted and sworne a Free Comoner and Merchant of the Staple within this Towne, accordinge to the ancient Libtyes and Privileidges thereof, and by his owne free consent hee ingaged himself to give to the use of the town XX Shillings in hand, and Twentie Shillings more when hee is better able." In 1663 an entry of nearly similar import occurs regarding Thomas Pottinger; and the payment of these sums was one source of the corporate income. They are required from all who are admitted to the franchise, the payments varying from two-and-sixpence to two pounds. The object seems to have been to increase the corporate fold, as not alone tanners, shoemakers, tailors, but labourers are admitted to the franchise, and all are required to pay more or less "for the benefit of the Towne uppon Demande." The Commissioners for the Precinct of Belfast are sometimes mentioned, but not frequently. They were, of course, supreme in the town, but their duties were of very extended character, and they appear to have left to the Corporation the management of their own little affairs.

Soon after the Restoration all the old scattered bye-laws were formally renewed. Their transcription occupies many pages of



the Record Book. They were the several local rules which had been repeatedly promulgated in past years, and which were now, after the Cromwellian government had come to an end, gathered together into a compact form. More attractive are the peculiar details which occasionally occur of the private state or feelings of some of the inhabitants, or the regulations by which classes were governed, or to which they claimed a right. These are but limited in number. Here is one relating to the privileges which the tailors of Belfast claimed in 1663 :—

“To the Right Worshipful George M<sup>c</sup>Cartney Sovereign of the Borough of Belfast and the Worshipful Bench his Brethren.

“The Humble Petition of the Tailors, Freemen of the said Borough, Humbly Sheweth that your Petitioners being by your Worshipful Favour admitted and sworn Free Commoners have upon all occasions given their dutiful obedience in watch, wards, assesses, and all other incumbent Taxes imposed on them by order, and still are ready upon all occasions to manifest their compliance, as far as their abilities extend unto. Now so it is that notwithstanding good and wholesome laws were established by the Common Council of the Borough and confirmed by your Worships’ consent for the encouragement of freemen inhabitants, yet a numerous set of idle vagabond tailors daily resort hither and reap the benefit of the Town out of your Petitioners’ mouths; not so much as paying one Farthing towards the defraying of any public charges, where by the frequent loss of the same your Petitioners with their Families wholly are ruined and undoubtedly will be, unless relieved. May it therefore please your Worships to consider the premises and grant your Order that all such loose persons may be compelled by your authority to depart to their several Residences and straight to leave the Town: otherwise that your officers, upon notice first given, may attach any such person so found to bring them before your Worships to pay the Fine imposed upon them by the Bye-Laws.”

“The Council taking due inspection found the request to be reasonable, and require and command the Sergeants at Mace, notice being first given, to apprehend any loose Tailors working in Town and bring them before the Sovereign to be dealt with according to the purport of the law.”

A truly singular and obstructive regulation, every way unjust.

The corporate wisdom was ignorant of the beneficial effects of competition.

“John Worthington, a free commoner, was disfranchised for concealing the goods of a foreigner and alien, but on his submission and petition was again admitted.”<sup>1</sup>

“Peirne Welsh, shoemaker, had a Controversy with a Journeyman. The said Peirne slighted and contemned the authority of the Sovereign and his officers, and casting at nought his oath of obedience as a free-man said he would not yield obedience to the Sovereign, and though the law is strict yet the Sovereign in his mercy remits the strictness of it to Disfranchising Peirne—sending him to prison for 24 hours and fining him 10 Shillings.”

“At an Assembly held January 7th 1664. Whereas daily complaints are made that great annoyance is caused by butchers suffering the blood and garbage of their Slaughter Houses to lie in the street and run in the kennels and ditches of this Town to the corruption of the River, and annoyance of the neighbours by reason of the evil and infectious smells, that, if not timely prevented, will bring some pestilential disease among the inhabitants. It is Ordered that every butcher will cause to be carried the same day all blood and garbage of killed beasts twenty yards beyond high water mark, under the penalty of Twenty Shillings.”

“Every person shall build and keep up the bank of the river with brick, or stone and lime. The wall to be built above the street as high as the parts already made. The building to be completed and finished before the last day of June. Penalty Ten Shillings.”

“Ordered that Hugh Eccles, merchant, shall have liberty to make a Bridge over the River of Belfast before his new House, so broad that a coach or cart may go over without hindrance. And any inhabitants may build Bridges over the River by obtaining consent from the Earl of Donegall.”

“1665. By a Bye Law for erecting and repairing a Court House, Market House, or Town Hall in the Borough of Belfast the inhabitants of Dunmurry, Malone, Falls, and part of the parish of Coole having

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<sup>1</sup> This was considered a very objectionable practice, the freeman's oath on his admission to the benefits and privileges of the Corporation being particularly directed against it. “And that I will not conceal or keep in my hands or custody any goods or merchandise of any foreigner or alien that is not free of the Corporation whereby to hinder the good and benefit of this Town.” Mr. Worthington had clearly trespassed against this clause, as had others, to whom attention was directed at a former period.

contributed to the same, paid their proportion of County Cess, may bring their Goods into the Town free of Toll and Custom at the Gates."

The last of these extracts introduces the Markets, and the original Market or Town House of Belfast, details regarding which so frequently occur in the Records that the subject might fitly have been included among the miscellaneous articles in another place; but as nearly all which relates to it is to be found in the Town Book, the introduction of the matter here is equally appropriate. It has been shown that so early as 1639 a Town Hall of some kind is mentioned. It was in character with the unimportance of the place, but was, it was conjectured, established on or near the spot where it afterwards acquired long permanence—opposite the Castle Gate, at the corner of the present Corn Market, in the very heart and centre of the little town.<sup>1</sup> The ordinary general market naturally found its place in this locality for the convenience of the inhabitants, who were all in early times close to it; and the Town House, Market House, or Tholsell (for by all such names it is called in the

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<sup>1</sup> The old markets and fairs of Belfast require a passing notice here. The Friday market, though comparatively unimportant in these latter days in the perpetual market which the town now requires, has been in existence for 270 years. The first old fair was established on the 1st of August so long back as 1604, and continued till recent times on the 12th of that month, thus corresponding, taking into account the change of style, with the day of its original creation. The patent for it was obtained by James Hamilton and Sir Arthur Bassett, the latter of whom was the brother-in-law of Sir Arthur Chichester (having married his sister Eleanor), and acting in trust for him. It continued for three days, during which it is probable much of the business of the year was transacted, as is still the case in rude countries where no roads exist, and facilities of every sort are deficient. The patent was renewed to Sir James Hamilton in 1611, thus proving that the fairs and markets are of more ancient date than the old Corporation. Hamilton's power of interference arose from the loose way in which grants of lands were made in Ireland in the early years of the reign of James the First. We have seen that Hamilton came to Chichester with copy of a grant from the King to him of the same possessions which Sir Arthur imagined he had himself previously secured by the same means. At any rate, there was for a time a kind of unsettledness; but in 1621, when the Corporation was fully in progress, the patent for the fair and markets was renewed to Lord Chichester only, with the addition of the winter fair on 28th October, and which continued to be held, till within a few years past, on the 8th November.

Records) stood immediately adjoining, and in which most usually were held, for long years, the ordinary assemblages of the inhabitants and strangers for business, instruction, or amusement. This, the first market place of the town, gradually extended its bounds. There are none now living who recollect the pedlars' stalls in High Street, set up in due form for the disposal of the miscellaneous goods in which such traders dealt; or the "gray merchants" referred to in the old orders in the Records, and which was a term current in the time of Queen Elizabeth, and descriptive of those who sold the unwhitened linen or woollen frieze in its natural neutral tint; but the street was covered much less than a hundred years ago by their successors, the dealers in "soft goods" of more modern fashion, in haberdashery of all kinds, in crockery ware, in provisions, and the numerous articles of common necessity. The Market House itself had not acquired form till 1664, and the following extracts from the Town Book will show how small a matter was thought sufficient for those days, and under what circumstances improvements and extensions originated:—

"Whereas there hath been for a long time past great want of a Court House or Town Hall for this Corporation whereby the decency, authority, and well governing of this Borough hath received prejudice and detriment both in the body corporate and politic unto the annihilating of that antiquity, splendour, and majesty wherewith it has been adorned—Wherefore we have in council determined and decreed that such decays and ruins shall be repaired, and to that end we have given a charge to the Grand Jury in Hilary Term 1663 to inquire and present the yearly charge and repair of the Court House let unto the Corporation by the now Sovereign George M'Cartney who hath procured leave and permission of the Right Hon. the Earl of Donegall that the upper part of those cellars next the Market Place which the said Sovereign now rents of the Earl and hath rented for some years past shall be made use of as a Court House as it has been in the year 1663 and this present year of 1664 during his Lordship's pleasure; And Whereas the Sovereign upon his own charge hath made a pair of 'stayres' to the House and adorned it with his Majesty's Arms, and caused seats both necessary and convenient to the aforesaid use of the Corporation, We do therefore according to the presentment of the Grand

Jury dated March 23rd 1663 and the judgment of workmen on the charge the Sovereign has disbursed order that the sum of Twenty Pounds sixteen Shillings and nine pence be forthwith levied and paid to the Sovereign."

But this is not the entire history of the old Market House and Town Hall. It was the busiest and most important spot in the town, as, in a manner, it still is. The original Market House at the Castle Gate, got up, as has been seen, in 1639, had, besides its situation, desirable surroundings or appurtenances, either in High Street or in Corn Market, or in both. The business premises of George M'Cartney were here. He seems also to have possessed the Market House itself, and had rented some part of his tenements to the Corporation for the transaction of their affairs. They paid £5 a-year to him for this accommodation, and had even allowed two years' rent, or £10, to accumulate, as stated in the Records; so that, besides the money disbursed in making the "stayres," the "seates" for the Burgesses, and setting up the King's Arms, the town had also to raise and pay the arrear rent due by the poor Corporation. The entire narrative is written in the Records in rather an involved style, but the object and meaning are obtained with correctness from the above. The £5 a-year at second-hand for the Town Hall in 1663, and the £20 16s. 9d. to be paid for the Municipal Buildings, as we now sometimes call such edifices, erected by Mr. M'Cartney for corporate accommodation, are notices sufficiently explicit.

The Town Hall of Belfast was thus made noble enough to uphold the "splendour and majesty" of the Corporation. Soon after, this order referring to the locality was found necessary:—

"Whereas daily complaints are made of the inconvenience of the butchers keeping their meat upon the streets without shambles, which is not only indecent in itself but much straitens that part of the street which is designed for public market. And whereas for the public good there is an apartment prepared within the new building on the south side of Castle Street, that all butchers, inhabitants of this town, shall repair to said apartment and furnish themselves with shambles



convenient before the 25th March next.<sup>1</sup> Penalty if found with stalls in the streets 12 pence sterling."

Does the "straitening" of the street here mentioned refer to the narrow part of what is now called Corn Market? Should such be the case, it is a very old blemish indeed.

Various notices and regulations about markets elsewhere occur.

The entries of the names of those of all classes who, shortly after the Restoration, were admitted to the freedom of the Corporation—from John Crutchley, a plasterer, who is appointed *gratis*, because he works on the same moderate terms at the Market House, up to the Earl of Clanbrassil and four or five other titled persons—are extremely numerous.

"January 1665. Ordered,—that from time to time sums of money have been received by the Sovereign; and by the late rebellion and other revolutions happening for several years no account has been given of said moneys; wherefore an account must now be taken, and at the same time it was Ordered that as the Town has no stock, land, or fund, all freemen must pay their fines on being admitted to freedom."

The inquiry into this most important branch of corporate affairs is not prosecuted in the Records. No further notice of it appears.

"1668, July 9th. At an Assembly of the Sovereign and Burgesses of Belfast held this day it was agreed that the sum of Four Pounds Sterling be levied by way of Cess upon the Corporation, for the making of a new Plush Cushion for the Town Hall.

"Entered by order *per me*. SAM<sup>L</sup> DOWNE, *Town Clerk*."

Turf was the chief fuel in the 17th century, brought into the town in sacks on horses' backs. A prepared hogshead of the content of seventy gallons for measuring turf was "lodged at a convenient place to be ready on all occasions, and a fine of Two pence was imposed on the owner of every sack which did not fill the hogshead;" but then the cunning turf-cutters adopted an

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<sup>1</sup> To this day, not indeed now in the spot named according to modern street titles, but certainly in the locality, some of the most respectable victuallers in Belfast are still established, showing an occupation, it may be safely said, of that trade in this place of more than 200 years.



expedient which called forth an order, the remedy for which is not disclosed—"that the turffe in their size were cut so long as to hinder the close packing of the same in their sackes or common measure by which they are to be solde, so that the quantity of each horse load comes far short of y<sup>e</sup> common hogshead or measure;" meaning that if the hogshead were apparently full, it did not contain the quantity of turf it should have done if they had been prepared in a proper manner.

In 1677 a rate of six pounds is imposed for the purchase of twelve good and substantial halberts for the use of the town, "the better to arm and strengthen the Night watch for the good security and safety of the said Town." This is a very early notice of a night watch, but which had not in 1677 any permanent or settled form, nor indeed for many a day after. It would prove twelve night watchmen to have been required, which was a very considerable force for the time.

"10 April 1676. No stranger or alien, not free of the town, shall sell or put to sale in public or private any bread of any kind soever, except on the market day from 9 in the morning to 3 in the afternoon."

The exclusive privileges of the freemen were still insisted on.

"1680. That the poor's money be bound on lands or in good hands, and such security be passed by Indenture from Sovereign to Sovereign yearly, and the Table where the benefactors to the poor are inserted be fairly drawn over, and the Earl of Donegall's name may be entered in letters of gold with the sum blank in its column till the £200 left in his will<sup>1</sup> be paid for the use of the said poor, and also the names of all other persons with their sums be entered that hath given, that others, when they see what is left may be induced to follow their good example for the good of the decayed inhabitants of this Corporation."

"To prevent the dangers to which persons walking in the night about their lawful occasions are incident, every inhabitant in every street and lane of this Corporation shall from henceforth in every year, from the 29th of September to the 25th of March, hang out at

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<sup>1</sup> This was the first Earl, who died in 1675, and the words might imply that the payment of the legacy was at least not prompt.

their respective doors or windows one Lanthorn and Candle lighted, from the hour of seven o'clock till ten at night, when it is not moon-shine, upon pain of Six pence per night."

This order is a little differently expressed in other places. "Every other house door or window" is thought sufficient for a light to illuminate the dark little streets and lanes of the town, "for the benefit of the inhabitants and passengers and to prevent disorders and mischief."

"That all inmates and beggars who come into, and secretly convey themselves into the Town may be diligently sought after, and a speedy course taken to discharge the town of such."

"That a rate be put upon salters and packers of beef under a penalty if they do not salt and pack faithfully, and that none salt or pack beef for sale but such as shall be allowed and approved of."

There are many other regulations in the list, several of them quite similar to modern bye-laws. It is, therefore, not necessary to quote them. The entire were to be reduced and put in a certain method for the good of the town by the Sovereign, assisted by Lewis Thomson, John Hamilton, and Thomas Knox

The provision trade in beef was further guarded by this specific order about the same time :—

"Whereas it is known that the reputation of the trade in this Town is much impaired by the insufficiency of Beef Barrels for several years past ; it is therefore Ordered that after the 1st May next every Barrel made by any cooper in Belfast shall be of good well seasoned Timber, well hooped and staunch, and measure thirty wine Gallons. On pain of 12d. for every defective Barrel."

The condition of the town and the regulations for its good government and safety are further shown by the following order in 1686, when Sir William Franklin was Lord of the Castle, and Robert Leathes Sovereign :—

"Ordered that for the better securing the Houses in this town from Fire, and in imitation of the laudable practice of other towns every inhabitant of Sixty Pounds Sterling free substance, shall, on or before the 1st of May next, at his own cost, furnish one Leathern Bucket and deliver the same to the Sovereign to be lodged in some place ready

on all occasions. And that the Sovereign at the public Charge do complete the Ladders which now are Four in number, and provide a couple of Poles and Hooks and Chains for pulling down Houses on such occasions. Penalty for not providing the said Buckets Four Shillings and Six Pence."

Besides these weighty transactions of the Corporate body, occasional smaller notices occur in the Town Book, showing a little of its inner working or other peculiarities. A lady of title thus addresses the Sovereign in 1684:—

"SIR,

"I am desired by Sir Hercules Langford to acquainte you that hee cannot be in the North as hee intended and writt you in his last, by reason he is so dissinabelled by sicknesse that hee cant travill, but hee is well content that you have his place of Burgess of Bellfast. Hee knows its not in your Power to putt another in his place without his consent but since you desire itt and to doe you a kindnesse he quitts it and wishesse it may doe you much goode. He has such weaknesse in his righte hand that he cannot write nor make any use of his hand which is the cause that he doth not write to you himself which is all at present from your friend and humble servant Mary Langford."

It is related about the same time that "Sir William Franklin produced to the Sovereign and Burgesses, assembled at the house of Mr. John Hamilton then Sovereign, a writing under the hand and seal of Mr. Gilbert Wye wherein he resigned his Burgessship, in whose place Mr. Thomas Knox<sup>1</sup> was elected and sworn. Notwithstanding, some of the Burgesses were dissatisfied that Mr. Wye should be put out of his place without a fault or a resignation appearing, contrary to Charter, but now all were satisfied by the said resignation."

The following other notice about Wye and corporate proceedings is mentioned:—"A copy of part of a Letter from

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<sup>1</sup> This was *the Knox* who did not very long after retain his office or continue his residence in Belfast. There was another Thomas Knox, a merchant, at this time, and no doubt a kinsman of the more eminent one of the name, as in his will, dated in 1706, he leaves "Thomas Knox of Dungannon in Co. Tyrone Esq. one of his executors," and, as was so usual with those old Belfast merchants, £5 to the poor of Belfast.

Colonel Hill to George M'Cartney Sovereign of Belfast bearing date at London the 31st of July 1680 has these words—' Mr. Wye offered to resign me his Burgessship ; my Lady is willing to have it for Mr. Knox, and so am I John Hill.' ” Very laconic and to the point. My lady here mentioned was the Countess of Donegall. The name of Gilbert Wye is frequent at this period. He was steward to the Earl in 1662, and may have been the writer, three or four years after, of much of the ponderous roll which recounts the expenditure and usages of the family in the Castle in 1665-66.

It was to be expected that the great era of the Revolution would receive due recognition in the old Town Records. The abrogation of the original Charter ; the occupation of the town by King James's army ; the entry of King William, his stay and proceedings in Belfast, were very important occurrences, but there is almost an entire absence of any notice of them in the Records. One, indeed, is related at considerable length—his entry and reception—and it is here reproduced in full and in the exact words of the original. The very interesting character of the narrative will excuse the desire to preserve it entire in this place, though it is in some of its parts but a repetition. Before the entry of King William into the town Schomberg had reinstated the former Corporation. The restoration of their little “portable property” did not take place so soon, but it was acknowledged in time, and the schedule of what appear to have been all the “belongings” of the predecessors of the present Corporate body may suitably serve as an introduction to a narrative that may perhaps be described as the Town Clerk's history of King William in Belfast.

The inventory of the restored chattels runs thus :—

“I have delivered to Mr. William Lockhart, Sovereign for the year next ensuing, these things belonging to the Town ; that is to say—a copy of the Charter ; the parchment schedule of Bye Laws ; one Bond with warrant of Attorney ; rent charge and counterpart of a diseasance for £300 sterl: of the poor's money due by the Lady Marchioness of Antrim ; a Bond of Ten Pounds of the poor's money

due by me Lewis Thompson ; a tin quart, standard pint, standard half pint and knogin ; a brass fourteen pound with a seven pound weight, a four pound, a two pound, a pound, half pound, quarter, two ounces and ounce ; the brass quart standard John Griffin the Sergeant hath, and the brasse Standard Gallon William Ratcliffe the Water Bailiff hath. Also delivered the Town Seall. The original Charter Capt<sup>n</sup> M'Cartney hath.

“The above particulars mentioned above I have received.

“WILLIAM LOCKHART.

“1 October 1690.”

The following is the narrative in full, as written in the Records, of King William in Belfast:—

“Captain Robert Leathes was elected and sworn Sovereign for the year ending Michaelmas 1687, and afterwards elected and sworn from year to year successively till the end of the year at Michaelmas 1690, that Thomas Pottinger, merchant, and freeman of Belfast, without the consent of the Lord of the Castle, or of the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commonalty of the Borough of Belfast, procured a new Charter from King James then in Ireland, in the year 1689, and the said Thomas Pottinger made the first Sovereign, and Thirty Five Burgesses. In the new charter of King James there is a proviso that the Lord Deputy General or other Chief Governor of Ireland with the Privy Council have power to remove the Sovereign and Burgesses, or any of them, or any other Officers in the said Borough at their will and good pleasure from their respective offices and places of trust, and that no Recorder or Town Clerk of the Borough aforesaid that shall be elected and chosen by the Sovereign and Burgesses be admitted till he or they be approved of by the Chief Governor aforesaid, so that it appears plainly by this proviso that the Sovereign, Burgesses, Recorder, Town Clerk, Sergeant at Mace and any other Officer of the Borough without any fault committed may at any time be set aside or removed at the pleasure of the Chief Governor and Privy Council of Ireland, anything to the contrary thereof notwithstanding.

“O ! brave<sup>1</sup> Thomas Pottinger who did not consider the solemn oath of a Freeman taken to maintain all the rights and privileges of the Corporation granted by the old Charter, by which the Corporation

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<sup>1</sup> There is a blot of ink over this word, and it is impossible clearly to discern it. *Vaine* or *brave* is probably the word, either applicable to Thomas Pottinger in the disparaging or sarcastic sense in which the writer is indulging.

was governed by a Sovereign and Twelve Burgesses, besides the Earl of Donegall, Lord of the Castle of Belfast, and the Constable thereof, who are Burgesses by the old Charter !

“That, upon the landing of their Majesties’ army at Bangor in the County of Down the 15<sup>th</sup> day of August 1689 under command of his Grace Frederick Duke of Schomberg, general of their Majesties’ forces, when he came to Belfast he issued a Proclamation bearing date the 18<sup>th</sup> of September, empowering and commanding all Protestant subjects to return to their respective properties and the Corporations to their ancient Charters, and the Protestant Justices to their respective trusts, empowering them to do and execute all things they might or could do by virtue of their Charters and Commissions of the Peace : pursuant to which Proclamation Captain Robert Leathes, the last Sovereign of the Old Charter at the time when the new one was brought to Belfast, took upon him again the Government of the Corporation as formerly and continued therein till Michaelmas 1690 ; in which year the 14<sup>th</sup> day of June his most gracious and puissant Majesty King William landed at Carrickfergus, and that same day his Majesty and Duke Schomberg in a Coach came to Belfast, the town at that time being full of his Majesty’s army and train of Artillery, besides many hospitals of sick soldiers from the Camp of Dundalk—was received at the entrance of the town by the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Inhabitants and that part of the Army there in their best Formality, with acclamations of great joy and rejoicing, and was conducted to the Castle where he graciously received the Sovereign and Burgesses—where the Sovereign upon his knee humbly presented the Rod of Authority which his Majesty received bidding him rise and gave it back again ; and the Sovereign again kneeling presented an Address of the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commonalty which was read before his Majesty and after received it, and the King put it in his pocket, and then the Sovereign and Burgesses had the honour of kissing his Majesty’s hand. That his Majesty staid five nights in Belfast, and was very well pleased with the Inhabitants and the Town, and its situation, and said (when within the Castle and the doors being open to the Gardens) that it was a little (or like) Whitehall. It cannot be omitted to tell that the Sovereign intended to acquaint his Majesty that this Corporation had neither Lands, Tenements, Hereditaments, Rents or Commons to maintain and support the authority of the same or for discharging any public Taxes or charges of the Town, though by its Trade it was considerable in Customs and Excise in the Exchequer to the value of



Twenty Thousand Pounds sterling<sup>1</sup> per annum, humbly to pray his Majesty that he would be pleased to grant out of the enemy's estates he was going to subdue such a proportion as his Majesty in his gracious favour might think fit; but the Burgesses were altogether against it, saying (amongst several of their arguments) it would be a great shame to beg of his Majesty on his coming to town, though they were told that such opportunity (if lost) might never again be had. It was certainly reported by a gentleman of good credit and reputation that when the King was in the west of Ireland, discoursing of the kingdom in general, this gentleman being present, heard his Majesty say that he liked the north part where his Majesty had been, especially Belfast and the country thereabouts; and said likewise that if the magistrates and people of Belfast had asked any thing of him he would have given it them. The loss is irreparable till a King or Queen comes to Belfast, which may never be, but if it should so happen their inclination may not be so kind to Belfast as his Majesty King William designed,—the old proverb holds; a dumb man gets no land; time was, and now it is past.”<sup>2</sup>

Passing from kingly matters, this market notice occurs in the Records under the date of the 8th September, 1694:—

“Ordered that the Market for the sale of butter, hides, and tallow

<sup>1</sup> The handwriting expressing this sum is either somewhat faded or a different kind of ink is used, as if the amount had been inserted afterwards. It was, however, scarcely correct, and the elastic word *about* would have been necessary to keep the speaker safe, if such a statement had been made to the King. The exact public revenue of Belfast from all sources in 1690 is shown in the article on Early Trade. If the King had been informed that the revenue was nearly £20,000 a-year it would have been almost excusable, as our old Corporators desired, no doubt, to put the best face they could on the rank of the town, and they would have calculated that his Majesty had more important matter in hand at the moment than to think of auditing the accounts too strictly.

<sup>2</sup> This mode of concluding a sort of official document is very quaint. No other king or queen did come to Belfast till 1849, when changed times rendered the recovery of the lost opportunity not adapted to modern circumstances; when all were, *perforce*, dumb men in the matter of obtaining substantial favours from royal hands. But Belfast has not at any time been much indebted to extraneous aid in the direction indicated. This has, probably, been no disadvantage. Both towns and individuals who have to look to themselves, who are obliged to show independence of spirit and to exercise self-reliance, are generally the most successful, and always the most worthy of approbation. Whether this now recognised doctrine would have coincided with the views of the rather original Town Clerk of 1690 is rather doubtful.

within the town of Belfast shall be in Castle Street or some part thereof between the Upper Castle Gate and Church Lane and Skipper Lane on either side of the River, and in Bridge Street between the Bridge called the Stone Bridge and the corner leading down to Broad Street and Rosemary Lane."

There was no pork in those days, or it also would have formed an item in this market order. Some of the present generation who will remember where the pork and butter market was held down to a late period, and when carts laden with dead pigs extended up the whole length of Waring Street or Broad Street, sometimes into Donegall Street, will not say that the town had advanced with extraordinary rapidity in the market department from the year 1694. But it is odd that Castle Street in this order is mentioned instead of High Street, which latter, it can hardly be too often said, was the real market ground of the town in the old days.

The century ended with the following regulations concerning the carters or carmen of the town. They are curious, not alone for their local allusions, but for the evidence they afford on the wages question, and the action of bodies of workmen for their own protection :—

"8th May 1701. Strangers and townsmen being imposed on by porters and carriers, in future the following rates to be charged on pain of being suspended from their employ, disfranchised of their freedom, and amerced as extortioners.

"First. For every Ton of Salt, coals, or goods portable in bags from the wharf to the Barracks<sup>1</sup> or without Mill Gate, and to Peter's Hill, or without North Gate, Twelve Pence per Ton.

"Second. For every Ton of Coals or Salt &c. from the Key to any place above the Bridge opposite James Arbuckle's House; to any street, lane, or place within North Gate and Mill Gate, Two pence per load, being eight pence per ton and no more.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Barracks in Barrack Street were built only in 1739. Early Barracks are mentioned as having been in Ann Street, though the notice mentioning Mill Gate would rather lead to the opinion that a Barrack of some kind was up in that direction in 1701.

<sup>2</sup> This would prove 5 cwt. to have been the load of the wheel cars which formed the general vehicles for the conveyance of goods through the town in those days.

“Third. For every Ton of Coals, or Salt &c. below the said Bridge opposite James Arbuckle’s House Six pence per Ton.

“Fourth. For every hogshead of wine, vinegar, or other liquor Two Pence per Hogshead.

“Fifth. For every butt or pipe of wine, brandy, or other liquor drawn on the *stale* and cellared by the carman eight pence to any place within the Gates. For every hogshead of Muscovado Sugar Sixpence.

“Sixth. For every Ten Firkins of Butter being a Car Load, from Peter’s Hill or any part without Mill Gate or any other street or lane in Town Two pence.

“Seventh. Every Carman standing next to any goods to be laded, shall set to work at the aforesaid Rules without pleading any new or other bargain for his work than the above Rules, and every merchant may choose and make up of such carriers as he thinks fit.

“Eighth. Every Carman shall be ready on all occasions, by turns, upon the summons of the Constable to do all public services for the King upon moving of the army or otherwise.

“And for the encouragement of a certain (number ?) of labourers to do all the work at the rates aforesaid, and that stragglers do not entrench upon their privileges, the licensed porters for work are reduced to the number of Thirty whose names follow.

“And all other labourers are hereby discharged to work with any horse or cars, and it is hereby ordered that no person shall be licensed as a Carman till the death of, or a superannuity of some of the aforesaid persons; and such as then make application to succeed in the office shall repair to the said Corporation of Carmen, without consent of the major part of whom the Sovereign and Burgesses are not to enlist any such new Carman.”

A curious symptom of trade combination acquiesced in by the governing body. The names of the favoured carmen are wanting.

This concludes all that is necessary to be quoted from the Town Book of a general nature, so far as the 17th century is concerned. The passages that have been selected may give a tolerably fair idea of the entire contents. As it extends into the 18th century the entries become every year less interesting and more brief, and are scarcely anything beyond the formal admissions of persons to corporate privileges. The Commissioners on Municipal Corporations in Ireland correctly describe this

Book as "coming down to June 1716,<sup>1</sup> with a few scattered entries of later dates between that time and 1750, and that the entries in the modern Book commence on the 5th June in that year and are continued to the present time, 1833." This latter book does not accompany the older one. The imperfect character of the Records, however, from 1716 was in keeping with the decay of the Corporation itself. It was a body that, for the last century of its existence, or more, was in a state of absolute decrepitude. In its origin it may have served a purpose, but its tendency was ever to a close Corporation, which it ultimately became. The entire power finally centred in a few irresponsible individuals, whose proceedings were without publicity, and otherwise so defective that a proportion of the property of which they had the management was lost from neglect or misappropriation.<sup>2</sup> The freemen who possessed such a standing in the seventeenth century became almost literally extinct. The old Corporation could no longer live in the increasing town of Belfast, and in 1842 it died at last, unnoticed and unregretted.

To make a final observation about the general contents of the Old Corporate Records, it is impossible to refrain from repeating

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<sup>1</sup> Nearly the last entry of any interest indeed is of 1716, and refers to the repeal of a certain bye-law in these words :—

"25 June 1716. James Gurner Sovereign.

"Whereas there was a Bye Law made prohibiting any Burgess after having been elected and sworn Sovereign of this Borough to sell by Retail in his House any wine, Beer, Ale, Aqua vitæ, or other strong Waters, or keep entertainment in his house during the time of his being Sovereign, on Forfeiture of One Hundred Pounds. And whereas it is the opinion of the Sovereign and all the Burgesses now present that whoever is admitted a Burgess ought to be qualified to serve as a Sovereign, and also the said Bye Law is useless and inconvenient—It is therefore Ordered that the said Bye Law be and is hereby repealed, annulled, and made void to all intents and purposes whatsoever, and the same is accordingly hereby declared to be from the date hereof annulled, revoked, and made void to all intents and purposes whatsoever."

<sup>2</sup> In proof of this statement see the *Report from the Commissioners of Municipal Corporations in Ireland, 1833-34*, pp. 726-737, where the condition and disposal of the corporate property is explained at length, from the first bequest made by Edward Holmes in 1631 of the £40, down to the date of the Inquiry, during which long period very considerable sums seem to have been dealt with by the Corporation, chiefly bequests originally for the benefit of the poor.

how remarkable, or rather how unaccountable, is their silence with regard to great events which took place in Belfast during the long years in which they were being compiled. This is particularly applicable to the occurrences of the revolutionary wars. They contain nothing with respect to King William in Belfast except what has been copied, yet his presence here was a historical incident in which the whole nation was interested. They are almost equally blank about Schomberg, who was nearly a year in and about the town, saving the few weeks of his absence at Dundalk ; not less uninforming about the multitudes of diseased soldiers who were conveyed to Belfast from that place both by sea and land in November, 1689, though they had only departed from it in the September preceding ; or of Mr. Shales, Purveyor-General to the Protestant army, who was accused of being the cause of all the Dundalk disasters by failing to provide medicines and other necessaries for the troops, and who was in consequence taken prisoner and confined here ; or of the numerous persons of distinction who arrived in the town during the busy year which preceded the battle of the Boyne ; and many *memorabilia* which might reasonably have been expected to have been sufficiently exciting to force attention from our old corporators. No person can properly write of past events in whose mind there is not a picture of the era under consideration, but any assistance from those who were witnesses or hearers of them is not to be derived from the Corporate Records of Belfast.

It only remains to make some observations on the outward appearance of the Town Book, and on some small "pendicles" which were the property of the former Corporation, and have passed over from it to the Mayor for the time being and the present Corporate body of Belfast.

The Common Town Book, as it was named by Dr. Kirkpatrick, but more correctly the Old Corporate Records of Belfast, notwithstanding great deficiencies, certainly contain more ample details than will be found in the possession of any of the other Corporations established in Ireland by James the First. The latter, as



a rule, may not generally possess any records, and it is not likely any of them can show a volume like this. The Book is eleven inches long by seven broad, very handsomely bound and lettered. It contains about 360 leaves and above 700 pages, of which a few in the middle are blank. So little in chronological sequence is it, as already mentioned, that the first entry at one end is an account of the presentation of the freedom of the Corporation to Primate Stone in 1748; the next, a list of constables of the town in 1753; and opposite to which is a pen-and-ink sketch of the face of Robert Leathes of the 17th century. The pages are certainly in many cases regular for a considerable period; then a sudden break will appear, and the book must be reversed to catch the connection. It was so in its old binding, and, unless the leaves had been properly arranged by a skilful hand, could not have been otherwise in its renewed form. It will thus be understood that much care was required even to obtain the limited extracts which have been here presented to the reader.

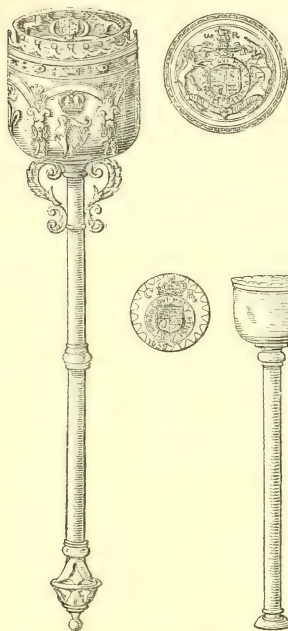
The material objects, with some of which at least the Town Book was long associated, are—

First—the Gold Chain formerly worn by the Sovereign, and afterwards by the Mayor of Belfast. This chain was presented to the Corporation so lately as 1787 by Lord Donegall, but has very recently been replaced by another of greater size and elegance, and more befitting the dignity and importance of the present body. The badge attached to the old chain has on one side the arms of the house of Chichester, on the other the arms of Belfast, with the mottoes in both cases.

The next articles are the two Maces. One of these is of great value and interest, in connection with the history of Henry Le Squire, presently to be noticed. It is of silver, but hollow, seven and a half inches long; the round top is greatly battered and disfigured. On one side the words “The Burrogh of Belfast” are distinctly though not very straightly engraved—the date 1639; C. R. for Carolus Rex, with the usual royal arms and motto. It is not possible now to say from what cause the indentations on this mace may have arisen, but there is an account that one



of these symbols of authority was long out of the possession of the Corporation, and was recovered some years since from a pawnshop either in London or Belfast, in which repository it may not have been treated with much care or respect. It is



THE MACES OF THE CORPORATION OF BELFAST.

difficult to ascertain the exact truth in a case of this kind, but from the bad usage this curious mace has somewhere undergone it may be conjectured to be that to which this story refers.

The second mace is much larger than the former, being seventeen inches in length, and of proportionable diameter. It also is a silver case, the inside being filled up with some light material. Its probable date is the time of the Revolution, as the letters W. R., for William the Third, are impressed above the royal arms and motto, though not very distinctly; and round the ball or top are embossed the rose, the thistle, the Irish harp,

and the lily or fleur-de-lis of France, as national emblems.

The Baton is a more humble instrument than the maces, though this is doubtful, as it is said to be that which the Mayor himself now carries. It is eight inches long, has a *lignum vite* handle apparently, a small crown at the top of gilt brass, and was carried, perhaps, of old, by the constable or town sergeant as a badge and evidence of office.

Besides the Maces and Baton there is a very handsome Cushion of red velvet, embellished with gold and silver filagree and

coloured silk. The arms of the town are represented on it, but no proof is afforded of the time when it became a portion of the corporate regalia. The assessment of £4 in 1668, to provide "a new plush cushion for the Town Hall," leaves it doubtful whether such was intended as a seat for the worshipful Burgesses, or an ornamental object on which to place the maces. The present cushion would suit for the latter purpose only, for which it is now used, and is probably but a renewal of the old cushion, and made at a recent time.

It is rather tantalising that none of these articles, nor the Town Book, nor any written document known, throws any light on the origin or history of the Arms of the town, or at what period or under what circumstances they were first granted. The arms on the Cushion have the well-known bell and ship, as have also many of the local Tokens of the town struck in the seventeenth century. Though this introduction of a Bell is considered on authority to be an error, and that it should be a castle, nearly all cities and towns bearing that charge, it may be questioned whether the incipient arms of Belfast, as represented on the tokens, were not taken advantage of when the arms were granted to retain what was heraldically wrong, in deference possibly to the practice or prejudices of the old merchants of the town. The Bell was their favourite emblem, perhaps on account of coinciding with the first syllable of the name of Belfast, and was therefore a canting bearing, a common and ancient form of heraldic charge. Be this as it may, a bell has by some means found a place in the arms of Belfast, and is likely to retain it. The late Sir William Betham in heraldic language describes the Arms, displacing the bell for a tower; and on a recent application to the College of Arms on the subject this answer was returned:—"There is no record in this office when Arms were granted to the Town of Belfast; in a MS. Book the following arms to the town appear in the handwriting of the late Sir William Betham, Ulster—'Per fess argent and azure; in Chief a pile vaire, on a Canton of the second a Tower of the first, in base a Ship with sails set, also of the first—Crest, a Sea

Horse, proper—Supporters, dexter, a Wolf, rampant, proper; sinister, a Sea Horse, proper.” The motto, *Pro Tanto Quid Retribuamus*, had its beginning, it may be supposed, with the Coat of Arms.<sup>1</sup>

There is a corporate seal of Belfast in the possession of a most respectable family in the town, a connection of whom held the office of Town Clerk in the beginning of the last century. It may be of that era. It is of brass, massive and well cut. The Ship and Bell are impressed upon it. The upper part of the ship is hidden by the pile, which is brought much lower down than that on the seal of modern times, but so much of it as is displayed quite resembles in clumsiness of build those on the

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<sup>1</sup> The following additional information regarding the Arms of the town is furnished by Mr. John Vinycomb, of Messrs. Wards' Royal Ulster Works, Belfast :—

“There seems to be an intimate relationship between the Chichester arms and the Belfast arms which cannot be overlooked in any enquiry into the origin of the latter.

“Sir Arthur Chichester would naturally be interested in the progress of the town and the development of its trade. When the merchants and others desired that a shield of arms for it should be adopted, what more natural than that they should first of all adopt some part of the arms of the lord of the soil, to whom they owed so much? The motto, *Pro Tanto Quid Retribuamus*, clearly expresses the sense of gratitude of the Burgesses to their liege lord, and when it is taken into account that part of the shield and one of the supporters are directly taken from the *Chichester* arms, the evidence of this interpretation is conclusive.

“The Chichester family coat of arms is—*chequy gold and gules, a chief vair*; a principal charge on the Belfast shield is a *pile vair* (a “pile” is a triangular-shaped charge, supposed to represent a pile or stake used in forming entrenched camps, and adopted probably in allusion to the defences of the town; and the colour, *vair* (a kind of fur), is taken from the shield of Lord Donegall). The Bell has been added as a play upon the first syllable of the name, as was the fashion in early times. It is always blazoned ‘on a canton gules a Bell argent.’

“‘Many early coats of arms allude in some way or other to the names of their bearers. *Armes parlantes* do not occur of later date than K. James I., about which time they began to grow into disrepute from ignorance and misapplication, and were nicknamed canting or punning arms. They were numerous at all preceding periods, not only in England, but throughout Christendom.’—Parker's *British Heraldry*.

“The supporters of the Belfast shield, from the want of a properly authenticated drawing or description, appear to be a wolf, or wolf-dog, on the dexter side, and a sea-horse on the sinister. The former is apparently taken from the Donegall arms. The sea-horse (as well as the crest), and also the ship on the shield, refer to the maritime position and interests of the town.”

town tokens of the seventeenth century. The motto, supporters, and crest are nearly identical with those of this day. Where "U" occurs the old form of "V" appears, but neither this fact nor the appearance of the ship is proof of antiquity, though that this is the oldest seal now in existence is extremely probable.

No other memorials, except what have been mentioned, have come down or are now in possession of the Corporation of Belfast as relics of their predecessors. The Town Book belongs to the Marquis of Donegall; the original corporate Seal, mentioned in the Charter, often spoken of in the Records, and specially alluded to in his will by Henry Le Squire, is unknown to the present Corporation—even an impression of it can nowhere be obtained. The two maces alone are here represented, and are the only articles of corporate property which have a claim to even a very moderate antiquity, the age of the baton and that of the cushion being uncertain, and the chain and badge of 1787 being too modern to require further notice.

## CHAPTER XII.

OBSERVATIONS ON SOME NOTED INHABITANTS OF BELFAST MENTIONED IN THE RECORDS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

SOME account of those whose names are most prominent in the foregoing Records, or who made themselves otherwise noted in the seventeenth century, and may therefore be considered the principal persons in Belfast in their time, will naturally be expected. The old Records are nearly destitute of any information on the subject, the facts that have been collected on this head having come from other sources. No attempt is made to construct a full genealogy of any of the persons mentioned, but merely to revive the history of a few men who were distinguished from their fellow-citizens for talent, enterprise, or some peculiarity, and the names of the most of whom, to the present inhabitants of the town, are, there is reason to think, utterly unknown.

Some of those who figured in the early days of the Corporation are referred to occasionally elsewhere, it being thought inexpedient not to make some remarks upon them as their names occur. Others come under notice in this chapter for the first time. An apology perhaps is necessary for introducing a subject which should, chronologically, have been preceded by the early topography of Belfast and matters requiring notice before, as a Corporation, it was created. It is hoped this apparent lapse will be excused; the chapter follows in natural sequence the history of the Town Book, let that history have been where it might—is, in a sense, a proper continuation of it; and as the names are so few, no confusion should follow the adoption of an arrangement in other respects so convenient.

The friends, relatives, followers, and officers of Sir Arthur Chichester were, in several instances, the early Sovereigns,

Burgesses, and parliamentary members. Some were of public distinction, and did not interfere with the affairs of the town; and of others, such as Burr, Hart, Holmes, Willoughby, Asshe, and a few more, to whom this description would scarcely apply, not a trace beyond the names has been yet discovered. Of John Vesey, the first Sovereign, as is elsewhere related more at large, a small record exists. He was enfeoffed in 1615 of a tenement in High Street, and also of lands in the fields of Belfast; but of his personal history, actions, or employment there is no relation in any document that has been examined. He is in the list of Burgesses in 1633. The name does not appear afterwards, and is now quite unknown in the town.

Two of the original Burgesses of Belfast of family distinction, Sir Moses Hill and Sir Foulke Conway, are never found as taking any share in its municipal transactions. They were intimates of Sir Arthur Chichester—so close, that to Hill he gave extensive lands near the town for £10 a-year, which were estimated by the traveller Brereton thirty years after as producing £1000. Sir Foulke Conway was Deputy Governor of Carrickfergus, discharging the duties there in the necessary absence of Sir Arthur from the place. To both, therefore, the titles of Burgesses were little more than honorary.

Humphrey Norton was another of the first Burgesses, also of rank, and a friend of Sir Arthur Chichester. He was the owner of, or resided at, Templepatrick, which place was first called Castle Norton, and was built, as well as Castle Robin, in another direction from Belfast, by Sir Robert Norton in the reign of Elizabeth. His name is also absent from the Records, and all public affairs connected with the town. Lowsley, or Lesley, is another to whom the same description will apply.

Sir Thomas Hibbotts was one of the first Burgesses, but was never Sovereign. Some in his position and rank were more connected with Carrickfergus than with Belfast, as being the ancient head-quarters and in all respects more important; and in the history of the former town notices of them will often be found. In the list of the first Burgesses of Belfast he is called



Steward to Arthur Chichester, Lord Deputy of Ireland, so that his connection with the family must have been intimate. In October, 1608, he contrived to get from Con O'Neill the townland of Ballynafeigh, in the county of Down, on which now stands a portion of Belfast, and by an indenture let the same to Walter Hilman and John Spenser for forty-one years, who assigned their interest therein to Sir Moses Hill.<sup>1</sup> He was very probably, therefore, a considerable land speculator, as in the great deed of 1640 to remedy defective titles, in which all the possessions of the Chichester family in Antrim, spiritual and temporal, are recited, these words occur:—"And also two Aldermen's Shares in the Fields of Carrickfergus between Glanarme and Copeland Water lately purchased by his Lordship from Sir Thomas Hibbotts Knt. deceased." He had property in Belfast also; was Recorder of Carrickfergus in 1602; and at a later date is described as Chancellor of the Exchequer. He was an Alderman of Carrickfergus, and in the Records of that town is called Exchange Master for "these partes," an office connected with the coinage or currency. He was at the funeral of the Lord Deputy in 1625, and had a long and frequent intercourse with this town; but, being a lawyer, and concerned in public professional offices, could have taken no part in its internal affairs in his office as Burgess.

#### LE SQUIRE.

This was not the case with Henry Le Squire, who was also a lawyer, and thoroughly identified with Belfast—the "Master Le Squire," in truth, whose house furnished the small munitions of war to Captain Lawson in 1641, and who was the most important inhabitant of Belfast at that time. He was Sovereign of the town in 1635–36 and '39; and was one of the Englishmen who had followed the fortunes of the Lord Deputy to Ireland, and settled in Belfast. He was now agent and seneschal to the Lord Edward Chichester, and was associated with Sir William Wrey in 1640, as already related, in settling with the Commissioners for Defective Titles the estates of the family. The

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<sup>1</sup> Note in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

beautiful sloping hill so near the town, called still, though the name is perhaps now wearing out, "The Squire's Hill," may be supposed to have derived its name from Henry Le Squire. The following is his will, which partially discloses his history, and the footing on which he stood with Lord Chichester and his family. Its date is 1643 :—

“My worldly estate being but smalle by reason of this unhappie waïre, I leave £5 to the poor of Belfast. . . .

“Item. I bequeathe to my most honored Lord and master, Edward Lord Viscount Chichester, and to my most honored Lady Mary Chichester, to either of them, a piece of plate of the value of £10; to Mr. John Chichester and Mr. Edward Chichester a piece of plate of £5 a peece, to be raised out of my goods or any other plate remaining in Isle of Man.

“Item. I give to Mrs. Mary Chichester my amatist ring, and to Mrs. Elizabeth Chichester my silver *aqua vite* cupp, and to her daughter Mrs. Mary a ring of the value of 20s.

“Item. I give to the Corporation of Belfast the Remainder due upon an account of my disbursements for their Maces, Seale, and Coat of Armes, and will that the Mace I have bee delivered to the Sufferane for the Towne's Use.

“Item. I give to my loving brother Mr. George Le Squire and to such child of his, as hee shall nominate, all the remainder of my term and estate in the lands and mill I hold at and about the Six Mile Water in County Antrim; to my nephew Edward Yeo the term and interest in land I hold from Mr. F. Hill in Co. Down; to my sister Peasely £10 out of my goods in the Island, and Mr. Poulet 5£.

“Item. I give to my honored friende Mr. Edward Conway my box of silver counters; and to Colonell Hill, Plutarch's Lives, and my case of Pistolls; and to Dr. Colvill two good Cowes; to Mr. Downes a Cloke or £5; and to Captain Burgh my Spanish Fowling piece; and to Mr. Frederick Haupert my collored plush Cloke; to Mr. William Leathes my golde seale ring; and to Mr. Robert Foster my golde Sergeants Ring.

“Item. I leave unto my loving wife Grace Le Squire my freehold land in the parish of St. David's in Exeter in England, and I appointe her my sole Executrix; and nominate and humbly desire my most truly honorable patron Colonel Arthur Chichester, and my loving friend Major George Rawdon, to be supervisors of this my will, and I bequeath to the Colonel my Best Horse, and to the Major my Gray

Mare. The residue of all goods and chattels, and all debts, together with the benefit of wardship of Mr. Daniel M'Neale I leave to my wife requesting her to give to my servants such small donations as my poore estate in these troublesome times will afforde."

Several of those mentioned in this testament will be recognised as public characters. Lord Chichester, his son Colonel Chichester, Dr. Colvill, and Hill and Rawdon, were so. He also remembers the younger branches of the family, to one of whom, Mrs. Elizabeth, the rather odd bequest, as it would now be considered, of a silver *aqua vitæ* cup was made. The custom of retaining the maiden name after marriage was in use among persons of condition at that time, as Elizabeth Chichester had long been the wife of Sir William Wrey, and Mary, the other daughter of Lord Edward, was also married.

#### WALCOT.

There is another will of the very same year (1643) made by an undoubted follower and dependant of the Chichester family, and as it curiously illustrates the customs of the time, and is very similar in character with the preceding, may follow it here. It is the will of James Walcot, member of a family which retained an interest in the neighbourhood of Belfast long after, and was also, like that of Le Squire, English, or of English descent.

"In the name of God Amen. I James Walcot doe make this my Last Will and Testament. I leave and bequeathe to my Hon<sup>ble</sup> Collonel my Two Testaments, a paire of *sweete* (?) thicke Gloves ; to my Lady my Cabinet and Seale ; to Mrs. Mary, Chichester my Gilt Looking Glasse, and Tortos Shell Combe ; to Mrs. Dillon my wrought Table Book ; to Mrs. Paulet my white Ivory Comb and my new Ribin ; to Mrs. Meeke one of my Red Boxes and a pair of Whit Gloves and to her son a little Silver Spooone ; to Margret Huson the other Red Box and a paire of Gloves ; to my goode Friende Mr. Felton my *Legor* (?) Cloke ; to Mr. Downes my black Cloake lined with Plush which wants a Piece in the Skirt ; to my good Friende Mr. Dumbell my Cappe wrought with Collored Silke and Goolde and a new Paire of Riding Bootes and Spurrs ; to Mr. Frederick Hubert my three yardes of French

Scarlet for a Cloake; to Bedford Charnock my *hair cullered* (?) Cloath Sute; to Mr. Dillon my greate Lether Saddel.

"I give and bequeath to my Dear Lady the sum of £50 to bee disposed of betwixt my sister Elizabeth and my sister Mary according to her Honble. discrecion in case my Sister Elizabeth bee bestowed; otherwise shée to have foure partes and my sister Mary a fiftie part of the said summe."

He leaves his "lande and the rest of his Cloathes and any other goodes not mentioned, unto my Honble. Lady to beestow upon my Brother Tho<sup>s</sup> Walcot, in case he doe apply himself in his service and demenur as to give my Honble. Collonell and her Ladyshipp content; otherwise to bee divided among the rest of my brethren as my Honble. Lady in her wisdom shall think fitte.<sup>1</sup>

"Belfast, 1643."

James Walcot was never Sovereign, having been possibly a man of retiring habits, and fully occupied in his office of Steward to the Chichester family. He is called chief agent to Lord Chichester in the petition of the inhabitants in 1645 to Colonel Hume to receive their rents in payment of their cesses. Thomas Walcot, the brother alluded to in the will by that name, was Sovereign in 1672.

It is curious that each of these testators should have left a "Cloke" to Mr. Downes the vicar, Walcot's garment being distinguishable by a rent in the extremities. But both wills are highly interesting, and might afford room for some explanation. The most striking point which either contains is that where Le Squire mentions the mace bequeathed by him to the Corporation of Belfast. There is no doubt that this is the small mace in possession of the present Corporation, and already described in the account of the little properties which have come to them from their predecessors. The date (1639) engraved upon it proves it to have been in existence four years prior to that of the will, and during the period of Le Squire's active career; and if it had not received the rough usage which it exhibits, his name, it is almost certain, would also have been found inscribed. There are some

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<sup>1</sup> Both these Wills are in the Record Office, Dublin.

letters on it, one or two quite visible, which, though answering to Le Squire as far as they go, could not now be said to form an approach to a name in full, so much is the object defaced.

The generosity of Le Squire is exhibited in an entry in the Records of 18th October, 1640, wherein it is declared that £26 had to be raised to place his Majesty's arms on the Market or Court House and to procure a proper town seal, "of which Mr. Le Sqyre was pleased to give £6, so that there is to be paid by the Town only £20." The entry is indistinct, but so far as it can be deciphered the above is the meaning; and it was a very considerable sum indeed to dispose of at such a time for such an object, this being the first and very mean Town Hall erected, as appears by the Records in 1639.

The small silver mace now in possession of the Corporation of Belfast was therefore that bequeathed by Henry Le Squire for the town's use in 1643. He mentions maces, for the making of which they were indebted to him, but only the one of this early date is now forthcoming.

The Town Seal and the Town Arms are referred to in the will, proving that both were known in Le Squire's time; and the balance of the sum which he had incurred in procuring them he freely remits to the Corporation.

He would appear to have removed some of his property to the Isle of Man for safety when the rebellion broke out.

#### LEATHES.

The family of Leathes was one of the most numerous and one of the most influential which the town of Belfast ever contained. John Leathes was Sovereign in 1638, which would imply a lengthened residence, perhaps as long as the first forming of the Corporation. William Leathes, his son, was Sovereign in 1645, and again in 1657, and was he who had the altercation with John Ash and others in the former year, as related in the Corporate Records; and Robert Leathes was the son of William. Another, called John Leathes also, was Sovereign in 1655; but the first-named three—father, son, and grandson—all held the

office at intervals from 1638 till after the Revolution. The Town Book contains the following account of the death and funeral of William Leathes, and affords ample evidence of the esteem in which he was held:—

“William Leathes was sworn Sovereign of the Borough on the 29th September 1659 for one whole year, according to the time limited in the Charter if he shall so long live, but on the 6th day of May 1660 he departed this life in Belfast where great lamentation was made for the loss of so honest, just, and upright a man. The next day following, appointed for his burial, he was carried by eight of his surname, paired in brothers, accompanied by the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Donegall and the Marquis of Antrim and the greatest part of the inhabitants of Belfast and many others. There was placed on his Hearse eight escutcheons of his Arms with the White Rod of Justice and the two Maces of the Corporation. Mourning Ribbon was dealt plentifully,—all performed by his Sons. And after he was interred and his funeral Sermon preached, Captain Francis Meeke one of the Burgesses of the Corporation by election, with consent of the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Donegall, was sworn in the office of Sovereign to continue to Michaelmas next following.”

The original seat of the Leathes family was Cumberland, and the branch in Belfast, there is little doubt, came from that quarter, with which this town had early intercourse. The name does not appear here now. About 1663 Widow Leathes, probably the relict of the William Leathes here commemorated, was owner of three of the small vessels called *gabbards* belonging to the port.

Captain Robert Leathes was Sovereign five years in succession immediately before the Revolution, and held that office when Thomas Pottinger was irregularly appointed to it; and also in 1697, in which year he acted as deputy for Lord Donegall.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A further proof of the history and standing of the Leathes family in Belfast in early times has been obtained. Among the relics in possession of the family of the late F. H. Lewis, Esq., is a large cylindrical vessel capable of containing a gallon or more. It is an ancient punch-bowl, made apparently of oak, now black with age and hard as ebony. Its construction is too complicated to be described in very few words. There are appurtenances attached to hold sugar, spices, and lime juice; and there are four small holes, at equal distances in the outer rim, in which



## THEAKER.

Thomas Theaker was Sovereign in 1644, and it was to him in that capacity the daring Covenanters of the town, when they had Monro and the Scotch forces to countenance them, presented the petition for remodelling the Corporation. Theaker wished to guard the Chichester interest, and went off to Dublin immediately to report to Colonel Chichester, who had gone thither after his expulsion from Belfast, the tone and character of the petition which had been presented to him. He was Sovereign also in 1654; and in 1657, under the Cromwellian Government, was one of the jury who assembled at Antrim to inquire into the state of the churches in the country. The Theaker family was an old-established one in Belfast, and continued there after the Revolution. They were originally English settlers in the town, as may be supposed from the name. There is a very lengthened will of Captain George Theaker in the Record Office in Dublin, from which the following few items are extracted:—

“I Captain George Theaker of Belfast in the County of Antrim and Kingdom of Ireland being of sound and perfect minde and memory and of good healthe, blessed be the Lord; but considering of the many frailties poore mortalls are subject to daylie, and of the great and

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to place the drinking cups, also probably of wood. These cups, whether of wood or glass, must have had slender, rod-like terminations to insert in the holes, in which they would be retained either full or empty. The following history of this vessel is written on a paper which is attached to the inside of the cover:—

“Presented to Robert Leathes, Sovereign of Belfast and Agent to the Earl of Donegall in the year 1690, it having been in the Donegall Family for upwards of 100 years previous.

“WILLIAM BYRTT, Great-Grandson of Robert Leathes.”

Though this object may not be so old as the description states, it is certainly a relic of venerable antiquity. There is a possibility that the great Lord Deputy may have dispensed the steaming liquor from it to Conway, Hill, and Hibbotts, and other early friends in war or council; and that it was the mighty punch-bowl of the noble house of Chichester cannot well be doubted. Being without name or date its real age can only be conjectured. The first Earl of Donegall resided in Belfast in considerable state and splendour for many years in the seventeenth century, and an article of this kind may have been indispensable, in accordance with the customs of the day, to complete the grandeur of the household equipments.

sudden alterations and changes of this uncertaine world I do make this my last will and testament in writing. . . . If I die in the north of Ireland, and if my executors can conveniently, I desire that they may interr my corps in Belfast Church amongst my ancestors and children. . . . I bequeath to my deare Father Samson Theaker of Belfast the moyety of the free profits of the lands of Cullentree nere Belfast during the continuance of the present Lease provided he live so long. I leave also to my deare Father £10 . . . Two thirds to his daughter Anne Theaker of what satisfaction shall be given or paid for all my arrears dureing my being concerned in their Maties service. . . . To his wife another third of what shall be given for arrears during my being concerned in their Maties service. . . . Daughter to get all if she survives the interest in Cullen-tree; if not his brother Clements Theaker. . . . To the poore of Belfast I leave £5 and to Thomas Theaker of Dublin minister one guinea to buy a mourning ring. . . . I desire Black George Macartney, James Buller, Tanner, and Thomas Theaker minister to be overseers of this will.

“Dated September 1690.”

Mr. Theaker was a captain in King William's service, and expressions similar to the above are not unusual in wills of the period. Like most of the other leading seventeenth century families, this one is extinct now in the town, at least as of standing or importance, though it may still be represented in the female line.

#### HADDOCK.

The family of Haddock, or Haydock, as it is sometimes spelled, were in Belfast in very early times. John Haddock was Sovereign in 1640, and signs by initials in printed form, that being, in some cases at least, the *mark* of the time. His probable descendant, Roger Haddock, was a more important person, and was one of those, perhaps the most influential of the number, who, as interested in the linen manufacture, presented an address to King William in Belfast to take that rising trade under his fostering care. He was three times Sovereign, and his resignation of Burgess and his reason for it are expressed in the Records. No will of either of these persons has been found, but there is one

of James Haddock, who, if a descendant or connection of Roger, was rather different in station to all appearance. His will is uninteresting, being only remarkable for containing, among bequests of small agricultural stock and property, the unmistakable legacy to his servant, John Conroy, of "the heifer with one eye."

#### DOAK.

Hugh Doak, or Doke, or Duok, or Diroack, in all which methods the name is spelled, appears more frequently in the Records than any other person of his time under his well-known signature of "HD." He was Sovereign in 1647, and there is every probability that he was one of the busiest and best known persons in the troubled days in which he lived. He was the Sovereign who is said to have been unable to write. This is difficult to determine. His signature is certainly always in the form of initials, the Christian name sometimes written before them and the surname after. John Haddock's name is set out in the same way; in both cases the writing is by varying hands, leading to the impression that neither of them could go beyond a mark; but having acquired by practice much dexterity in forming the initials, some Burgess or the Town Clerk supplied the deficiency by writing their names for them in the manner described. It would seem that Doak's initials carried weight: they are attached to the account of the contest between Leathes and Ash in the Records, as sufficient to confirm the decision of the municipal body, he being a Burgess who put himself forward on all occasions. A full signature even at the end of Doak's will is non-existent, the familiar initials, strictly identical with those in the Records, being alone appended to that important document. An extract from it will be sufficient; it gives the names of some places, and is explanatory of Doak's relationship to a more important and better known Belfast family than his own. He says—

"I bequeath to my grandchild Hugh Pottinger, son to Thomas Pottinger and to my late deceased daughter Jannet Doak, the Hous in High Street with the Halfe of the Parkes belonging to the said

Hous, and likewise the half conveniency of Brewhouse and Gardins and £100;—all which goes to him at the end of 21 years. If grandson should die before attaining that age, I make his father Thomas Pottinger the heir.—HD."

At the top of this will the name is written Diroack. Its date is 1669.

## MARTIN.

"Martin of Tours was a general in the Army of William the Conqueror, and the family after many descents comes to Sir William Martin, of large possessions in England. He had two sons, one of whom called Josiah went in the reign of Elizabeth to Ireland in a military capacity with Viscount Chichester from whom he received many favours. His son Josiah Martin was elected Free Burgess of Belfast and settled at Whitehouse near that place; and his son George Martin being a Loyalist assisted those who were going to join King Charles's army in England, and in June 1649 was elected Sovereign of Belfast. Oliver Cromwell's party burned Belfast Castle, and afterwards upon George Martin's refusing to billet some of the Republican troops, they pillaged his house, seized his goods and estates in the neighbourhood, and he and his family escaped with difficulty from his country seat at Whitehouse. He had eight sons."

So far Betham's *Baronetage of England*.<sup>1</sup> Some of this was related in the general history.

The family reached up by this authority to Martin of Tours. This may be; but the quotation, besides its historical errors, is calculated to mislead. A George Martin, always considered the same as he who was plundered in 1649, soon after was in Belfast following his occupation as a merchant. He issued a token in 1656; made his will in 1678, bequeathing "a Brew house in High Street; the Gardins, tenements, and houses in that plote of ground at the North Geate;" some property near the Custom House, £5 to the poor, and desires to be buried in "the Church of Belfast," which was no doubt done.

Whether he was really connected, or how, with the English family of the name of Martin in the *Baronetage* is not to be

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<sup>1</sup> Vol iv., p. 210. There is no account that the Castle of Belfast was burned by Venables in 1649.

discovered. It is at the same time proper to mention that Sir Bernard Burke, in his *Peerage and Baronetage*, derives Sir Henry Martin, County Berks, from Samuel Martin, *Green Castle*. It is farther noteworthy that in the lists of descent of the English baronets the name, Josiah Martin, often occurs; and among the Belfast Martins the same name, not a very common one, is also frequent. Josiah Martin issued a token in the seventeenth century, which shows that he as well as George was a Belfast merchant or trader.<sup>1</sup> It is altogether an obscure genealogy. The relationship between the Joys and the Martins has been noticed already.

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<sup>1</sup> And probably not a very extensive one. The following entry is in the Customs Books in the Record Office, showing something of trade and its nature in 1658, and the rank of the Martin family in connection with it:—

“I, Josias Martin doe herebye testifye that 22 Barrels of Herrings loaded on board the Katherine of Belfast Hugh Andrew Mr discharged in the Port of Ayr which Herrings were formerly imported by me and paid the duties of Customs and Excise.

“ 9 July 1658.”

Then follows acknowledgment of the drawback, if that word were known then in the modern sense.

“Recd of Richard Edwards Collector of the Customs in the Port of Carrickfergus 14s. 4½d. in full repayment of the half Customs and the hole Excise of the above said Herrings.

“JOSIAH MARTIN.”

A writer in *Notes and Queries* (Dec. 4, 1875, p. 451) asks some Belfast archæologist to look if any tombs of the Martins of old date exist in this town, as if possibly the English branch of the family, or some one for them, were desirous of finding out traces of their early Irish history. Nothing can be said of the Belfast connection, it is probable, beyond what has been related. The querist may be informed also that neither of the Martins, nor any other old Belfast family whatever, does there exist within the town a single record in stone or marble to illustrate family history. Everything here is new. That there may be descendants of the early Martins is every way probable. A man who had eight sons could hardly have had his race extirpated even by Oliver Cromwell's soldiers. The preservation of the name of their Irish home by Samuel Martin, the eldest son of George, as mentioned by Betham, is so far a proof of origin. According to that authority he was of Green Castle, Antigua—taken up, it may be reasonably supposed, from Greencastle, near Whitehouse, at a short distance from Belfast, and which is frequently said to have been the country residence of Mr. Martin of this town in the seventeenth century.

## WARING.

The family of Waring was more important for wealth and trading influence than any that has yet been named. They were located in Belfast at a very early period of its history. Thomas Waring was Sovereign in 1652-53, '56, '65, and 1666. William held the same office in 1670, after which no known representative of them appears as partaking of public matters in the town. In Burke's *Landed Gentry* John Waring is said to have come to the County Antrim in the time of James the First, and to have married Mary, the daughter of the Rev. Mr. Peers, of Derriaghy. His eldest son was William, born in 1619. He obtained Clanconnell, of which Waringstown forms a part, and Samuel Waring was his son. No account of Belfast is in this meagre statement, but the present head of the Waringstown family supplements it by the following more correct information:—

“The Waringstown branch, though descended from a common ancestor, separated before that family went to Belfast. . . . The common history of the family is as follows:—John Waring, son of a landed proprietor at a place called Cherry Tree House, near Chorley, in Lancashire, emigrated to Ireland early in 1600 (in company with a brother, who settled in Co. Kilkenny). He settled at Toome, in Antrim, where he got landed property and also established a tannery. He had by Miss Peers several sons—William, Thomas, and Paul. The first succeeded to his property and a considerable sum of ready money, and an opportunity offering of purchasing land in Down from Cromwell's soldiers, he sold the Antrim property in 1656 and purchased the Waringstown and many other estates in Down. The second, Thomas, removed the tanneries to Belfast, and was Sovereign of that town, I believe, in 1660. From him the Belfast family descend. Paul was a Doctor of Divinity, and died unmarried.”

Thomas Waring, above mentioned, appears by this account to have been the first of the family who settled in Belfast, established tanneries in Waring Street, and gave his name to that street, which it still retains. This pedigree is, no doubt, in the main correct, though John and Thomas Waring are contributors to the funds for Hume's regiment in 1645. Wills of two



members of the Belfast Warings have been examined, the older of which is, without doubt, that of the very Thomas who is represented to have been the first of the name who settled in Belfast. The following extracts from it show something of his history, and a little also of the fashion of the times. It is dated 1665. He desires to be buried "within the Church of Belfast;" leaves £15 a-year for life to Janet Waring his wife; "also the two Rooms *over* (? and) the Kitchen, wherein I now live, with the furniture, Bedds, and all things thereunto belonging, and one Silver Cupp and two of the best Sylver Spoones, with one Park of land near the North Gate leading to Carrickfergus." After some other directions he enjoins his son to see him "decently and handsomlie buried," and then leaves £40 to the poor of Belfast, to which he makes this addition—"And if it please God that my vessel called the Providence of Belfast return safely back from S<sup>t</sup> Se Basstins whereunto shee is gone and Laden with several Commodities to that place, doe saflie retorne without damadge bot to a gain, then my will and mind is that Twentie Pounds more shalle bee given to the said Poore of the Towne of Belfast."

The will of William Waring of Belfast, the son of the preceding, as stated when he was made Burgess, 17th April, 1660, is very long, and deals with large property. A few short extracts only can be inserted. It is dated 1676. He also directs that he shall be decently "Buryed in the Church of Belfast;" and after some other lengthened items makes the fifth, which is rather peculiar and now inexplicable. It is—"That my Exect<sup>rs</sup> allow my p<sup>t</sup>ended wife Nothing but what she Recovers by Law." The next clauses are somewhat curious—

"I Leave to my several Relations in Downe and Antrim, those of the name of Waringe, to each person qualified to wear them, as well Men as women, A Scarffe and Ring, and to the meaner sorte 20 shillings a peece in lieu thereof, if they demand it personally one Month after my Decease."

"I leave enclosed a Paper to be observed by my Executors at my ffunerall, and doe hope they will make it a Devout ffunerall; for Wyne and Tobacco giving to Strangers I think itt needlesse."

The paper referred to contains the names of those in Belfast who were to receive scarfs and rings. "Mr. Soverron, three Phissions," and many more of the principal persons in the town are remembered for these gifts. His executors are desired to be in "close mourning," and all his large property is left to his brother, Roger Waring, Clerk.

The Warings have another claim on the remembrance of the inhabitants of Belfast. It was Jane Waring, the daughter, it has been said, of the preceding William, to whom Dean Swift honestly and urgently proffered marriage in his comparatively youthful days. Swift, in his customary fashion, had given the poetical name of Varina to Miss Waring. It is undoubted that the lady was a member of this Belfast family of Waring, and a native of the town. As familiarly known, Swift was Prebendary of Kilroot, and one of his most interesting letters, dated 29th April, 1696, discloses his feelings respecting Varina. In it he says—

"My Lady Donegall tells me that it is feared my Lord Deputy will not live many days, and if that be so it is possible I may take shipping from here; otherwise I shall set out on Monday fortnight for Dublin, and after one visit of leave to his Excellency hasten to England, and how far you will stretch the point of your unreasonable scruples to keep me here will depend on the strength of the love you pretend for me. In short, madam, I am once more offered the advantage to have the same acquaintance with greatness that I formerly enjoyed and with better prospects of interest. I here solemnly offer to forego it all for your sake."

This letter is at more length, with some additional protestations of his sincerity, in Forster's *Life of Swift*.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing could be more explicit and straightforward. "She refuses, and kept him in a state of suspense for four years; then she is inclined to relent, but too late. Still Swift offers his hand, giving her to understand it was from a sense of duty."<sup>2</sup> The lady declined to accept him on such terms.

Swift's correspondence and general conduct in regard to Jane

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<sup>1</sup> p. 72.

<sup>2</sup> *Gallery of Illustrious Irishmen*, p. 139.

Waring are well known to those intimately acquainted with his history, and have excited considerable inquiry.<sup>1</sup> It is possible the will here last noticed, thoroughly sifted, and read, if possible, by the light of contemporary documents, might afford some new information on this affair. The expressive condition laid down in it regarding his wife is at least remarkable, and if the William Waring who wrote it was the father of Varina, a knowledge of his reason for making it might open up a curious chapter of family history. Accounts of Swift's visits to Miss Waring of Belfast, which no doubt he made, or of intercourse with persons in the town, would be attractive subjects of inquiry, but no knowledge of such topics has come down to us.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Mr. Deane Swift's Essay on the Life of his Relation* (p. 31); *Dr. Barrett's Essay on the Earlier Part of the Life of Swift* (pp. 82-3); *Dublin University Magazine*, Feb., 1840, p. 139; *Quarterly Review*, July, 1870, and sundry other works. Thackeray says, in his *English Humourists*, p. 45—for he too has a note about Varina, but without any allusion to her native place—that Swift was only nineteen years old when he wrote the letter in 1696 to Miss Waring. This is an error; he was twenty-nine. The after-fate of Varina is unknown, and she is by most readers overlooked in the higher fame and more touching incidents which marked the lives of Stella and Vanessa. It was hoped that the *Life of Swift* undertaken by the late John Forster would clear up the history of Miss Waring of Belfast. It is not so, notwithstanding the great industry and attainments of the distinguished author. He says that while Swift was at Kilroot, Waring, his old chum and chamber companion, was living in Belfast, and that he was intimate with the family for three years before 1696; that the most memorable incident of Swift's Kilroot life “had for its scene not the poor little church there but the neighbouring post town of Belfast,” alluding, of course, to Miss Waring being a resident in it; and publishes many letters on the subject, in one of which Swift shows symptoms of jealousy of a “dunce worth £5000 a-year who wrote execrable verses, and who like himself had access to the Donegall family.” The name of this rival so largely endowed with wealth is unmentioned. He takes occasion to speak very slightly of “the place she lives in and the people she lives with,” meaning Belfast; and it must be acknowledged that none could be imagined more uncongenial to a temperament like that of Swift. Mr. Forster has many most interesting remarks respecting Swift and Miss Waring in his work from p. 76 to p. 114, mixed up with relations about another individual of Belfast whose history also is anything but clear—the Rev. John Winder—and is obliged to conclude the account of the lady with these words:—“Varina re-enters the scene, quitting it again suddenly, finally, and mysteriously as ever. The complete story can but be guessed at; and no interpretation of the portions of it known to us can be other than unsatisfactory.” True—though Mr. Forster has done much to explain the story; but to make it clear and complete has baffled him and every one else.

There are numerous other wills of Burgesses, and some of Sovereigns of Belfast, obtainable. They are generally tame and commonplace, very many of them containing the injunction to be buried in the church or churchyard of Belfast. Roger Leathes, tanner, to be more explicit, desires to be laid "on y<sup>e</sup> east side of y<sup>e</sup> southe church door;" John Moore, a baker (1671), to be buried in the church of Belfast "with all rights and Ceremonys thereunto belonging." Vain endeavour to preserve from devouring time the fleeting name! Such bones and skulls as were not scattered more than sixty years ago were for the most part promiscuously mingled, gentle and simple alike, in one place of deposit. The ground which in their living days was so dear to the dead occupants—some of them expressing in their wills their desire to be buried with their ancestors—and which was expected to continue in sepulchral seclusion for ever, is now as devoid of any emblem of a venerable receptacle of death as the common on the heath.

Some of those old Belfast men use in their wills in a few instances language of a notable kind, a little illustrating the state of society, or usages, or family feuds. Thomas Harrington, who was a Burgess, and had been Sovereign, leaves to his nephew his "seale ring and a little silver salt," and "to each of the children of his sister a silver spoon." This was in 1655. Thomas Dobbin devises to Alice Dobbin's children "one half crown to be equally divided among them share and share alike;" the same fabulous legacy to the children of his sisters Janet and Margaret respectively, closing each clause up in all three cases with the sarcastic proviso, "when they come to demand the same." Chichester Macartney, whose will is dated in 1693, desires that "Forty Shillings be distributed at the door of my House on the day of my funeral among the Comon Begars." In the same year William Thetford, son of a late Burgess, and member of a rather well-known family of Belfast, bequeaths his property to his brother, "reserving one Tenement in Rosemary Lane to his mother during her life," and to his sister Mary he leaves "five ginnies of gold, and to sisters Ellinor, Elizabeth, and Anne one

ginnie p. peece.” John Taylor of Belfast leaves his wife Lydia two old silver spoons *formerly her own*, and though possessed of considerable wealth farther exhibits his (perhaps) crabbed disposition by leaving a sum to his daughter Abigail, “in case her husband settles on her one third of his effects;” and if not, he desires “that the said Abigail shall only receive Twenty Shillings.”

#### MACARTNEY.

George Macartney was the ablest man of his time in Belfast, and it may be said, without exaggeration, that at no period has the town contained a citizen of more ability. He came from Scotland to Belfast either in the year 1642 or 1649. His name has been already noticed in the Town Book in 1656, recording at that date the payment of his small fee upon admission to the freedom of the town—indicating, it is probable, not very affluent circumstances as yet, though he had been resident therein for some years. The cognomen “Niger” is also given to him in the Records, sometimes freely translated into Black George Macartney—a title which in some sort of fashion, perhaps after the Irish model, appears to have been borne, with modifications afterwards, by others of the name in Belfast. These circumstances would apparently prove that he occupied a position in the town, and was well known to the inhabitants of every rank. He was the possessor, in addition to his trading profits in Ireland, of a small estate in Scotland. It produced about £100 a-year, as near as can be ascertained, and many letters connected with it, and referring to the rents as payable seemingly in very small sums at stated times “at the Town House of Belfast,” are in the *Macartney Papers*.<sup>1</sup> The will of George Macartney in its entirety would occupy very large space indeed. Avoiding details, extracts are here made introducing

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<sup>1</sup> The *Macartney Papers*, an enormous mass, are in the possession of Hugh Hyndman, Esq., Solicitor, Belfast. They were open for examination to me, but the quantity is so great that I was able to make but a very imperfect search. So far as examined, nothing specially referring to Belfast was found. All that were looked at were Lord Macartney's papers regarding India, China, long accounts of money, and general diplomatic affairs—all which may be very valuable.



matters till now unheard of, and which, coupled with what is written elsewhere, should make the personal history of this originator of the family of Macartney in Belfast well and creditably known.

The will, after the usual preamble and thanks to the Almighty disposer of all things for lending and bestowing on him a great estate, first bequeaths to his eldest son James, the future judge, £600, and £20 a-year; to his other sons money legacies, as also to his three grandchildren "by my son in law William Lockart," all accompanied by contingent regulations. He desires his executors "to lay out at Interest to the best advantage the sum of £40 for the use of the poor old decayed inhabitants of the town of Belfast, to the end that the interest thereof may half yearly be distributed among the said poor Inhabitants by my executors at their discretion." He then leaves legacies to no less than thirteen apprentices and servants, all of whom he mentions by name; and orders "an abatement of half a year's Rent since 1688 to be given to every of my Tenants they paying the remainder cheerfully." The will then proceeds in words which will be understood when it is remembered that they were written in 1691:—

"I appoint the Legacies and sums of money abovementioned shall be paid out of such debts as are now due to me by obligations, bills, or otherwise; and out of the rents, issues, and profits of all and singular my messuages, mills, and lands in and about Belfast, my will and meaning being that if it shall fall out that if the present troubles, wars, and rebellion in this Kingdom of Ireland shall continue and so increase that the s<sup>d</sup> Legacies cannot be raised as aforesaid within the space of three years nor afterwards, then and in that case the said Legacies to be of no effect and irrecoverable as if I had made no such Legacies, my further meaning being that in case of such increase of warr and rebellion all my ready cash shall be preserved for the maintenance of my wife and sons Chichester and George."

The echoes of the revolutionary troubles were still to be heard in Belfast in 1691.

He then leaves to his son James his estate "known by the



name of Aughenleck in y<sup>e</sup> Parish of Dundrenan near Kircudbright in Scotland, desiring him not to aliene the same, it having belonged for many generations last past to my ancestours of my name." The next item returns to Belfast, in which he bequeaths his moiety of the Sugar House to his sons Arthur and Chichester.

Long provisoes follow this remarkable clause, aimed at Arthur Macartney, who perhaps did not take kindly to the sugar-boiling or milling business, and what was to happen to him should he prove "cross and uneasy to my son Chichester or unfriendly to my wife;" leaving to the latter "his new dwelling house in Belfast, with backhouse, garden, meadow, field, and likewise all the furniture, plenishing, and utensils belonging to the same."

Then he bequeaths his "four water corn mills, his tuck mill, and land belonging thereunto, and all his Leasehold Lands and Messuages, goods and chattels (herein above not bequeathed), ships, cargoes of ships, plate, and ready money," to his wife and two younger sons, Chichester and George, subject to arrangements not necessary to summarise, and concludes his very long will with these excellent words:—"I leave it as the desire and comand of a dying husband and father that my said wife and children behave affectionately and kindly each towards the other; and that my wife be bountiful to my son James, he behaving respectfully towards her, and assisting in her concerns." James did assist in her concerns, as, when his father with others fled for refuge to England at the revolution, his widow and son triumphantly vindicated his character and reputation, as will be presently proved. George Macartney was twice married; James and Arthur, whose untoward disposition is insinuated, were the children of his first wife; Chichester and George those of the widow who survived him, and of whom George continued the succession.

It is remarkable how, in the Peerage Books, not a word of all this is disclosed, and that the true character and real station of George Macartney are ignored. His pedigree in them is derived from the days of the Bruce: he is a captain of horse, Surveyor-General of Antrim, and possessor of a great estate near

this town, but no one could possibly tell from the language used that Belfast was the home of his affections and the field of his labours; that he was Collector of the Customs here and a merchant of repute; that he was shipowner, miller, sugar refiner—possibly, from mention of the tuck mill, also a worker in woollens; that he was chief magistrate, and that there was no project for the public advantage of which he was not the originator or promoter. Lodge or Archdall, or both, must have examined this will; and yet, while it laid open to them all these things, they are concealed and unrecorded, though they alone, as do all works of usefulness and earnest endeavour, constitute true nobility.

His family was honourably distinguished. James has been frequently mentioned. The Countess of Donegall, who died in 1697, leaves to "Alice, wife of her cousin James Macartney £50, and her set of dressing table plate in the black box." The cousinship arose from James Macartney having married a member of the Longford family,<sup>1</sup> to which she also belonged. The younger son of the first Macartney followed his father's footsteps in Belfast, was the leading person of his day, and died in 1757, representing this town in Parliament; he was the oldest member of the House of Commons in Ireland, having sat in it upwards of fifty-four years. The second son of the preceding, another George Macartney, married the youngest daughter of the Rev. John Winder, Rector of Carnmoney, and was father of a son also of his own name, who was consequently great-grandson of the first George, and who afterwards became Lord Macartney, the statesman, the renowned diplomatist and ambassador, high in talent as in station. Lord Macartney never appears in any public relation with Belfast, or to have taken an interest in it. He was born at Lissanoure, and in his old age resided there; he lived in the days when Lodge compiled his *Peerage*; and there may be a suspicion,—though this is but a mere conjecture, possibly most futile and untrue,—that he who had sat in kings' courts, governed great nations, and conducted affairs on which all eyes

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<sup>1</sup> Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. vii., p. 91.

were turned, did not care to recognise the little penny token of 1656 on which his own name was legibly impressed, or to revive the memory of the corn mills, the tuck mill, the sugar house, the market house at £5 a-year, and the other things which had been the life labour of his ancestor, the greatest George of all the four.

The proof of the first Macartney's occupation is fully unfolded by the rebuke he received from the Government about 1679, when he is told not to trouble himself about arms, that not being a merchant's business. He was a man in trade, from the first to the last. His military vocation was extra to his proper profession, and only arose in unsettled times or when disturbances were thought to be impending, as was common with persons of talent and known public influence. It certainly did not arise from his possession, as the Peerage books would seem to imply, of landed property in Ireland. He had many leases around Belfast and in the town from the Donegall family, but, so far as has been discovered, it was not till long after, that his descendant acquired that standing which broad lands in fee simple alone conferred in those days. The following extracts<sup>1</sup> are given in proof of this:—

“Freehold Estate of the Roote £5985 10 0. George Macartney Esq. of Belfast purchased Lands from John O'Neill of Edenduffcarrick and Robert Dalway of Bellahill by virtue of an Act of Parliament 10 Geo. I. for sale of part of the Estates of Henry O'Hara of Crebilly to pay Debts and Legacies. Enrolled 10th November 1733. The above contained Kneel Moyavir, Culbane, Tuornegre and Castle, Barony of Dunluce, Co. Antrim.”

And also—

“An Indenture in 1742. George Macartney the lands of Dervog, Barony of Dunluce, County of Antrim, for £7205, from the Trustees of the Will of the Hon. John Skeffington lately deceased and residuary Legatees.”

The purchaser of the Macartney estates in County Antrim,

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<sup>1</sup> The *Joy MSS.*

by this account, was the second George Macartney, who was so long Member of Parliament for Belfast. His father also, whose will and career have been commented on, though a Belfast merchant, held offices of importance. He was Sheriff of Antrim in 1680 (*Liber Hiberniæ*), and well known, there is little doubt, to all the magnates of the county.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> There were in reality three branches of the Macartney family when in Scotland, representatives of two of which came to Belfast—that of Auchinleck and that of Blacket, from the former of whom the Earl descended, as related in the text, and the latter is represented by a Baronet in the county of Armagh. General Macartney, Isaac, and many others of the name, were of the Blacket branch. In the Subsidy Roll of 1661 two individuals are mentioned of the name of George Macartney who were not in the relation of father and son. The two branches settling in Belfast about the same time, great difficulty would be experienced in tracing their separate descents. It is of course not attempted here, but the Auchinleck branch was much the more eminent, and to this family attention is almost entirely turned. Something more, therefore, about them naturally finds a place here. George Macartney, who has received so much commendation in the text, was Collector of the Revenue before the Revolution, and was accused by a person of the name of Guest of having fled from the town, leaving large defalcations in his accounts. It was proved to be a most groundless charge in an Inquiry and Report, which are in the *Calendar of Treasury Papers*, 1689, p. 72; and 1692, p. 243. The documents are too long for insertion, but it is declared “that the said Mr. Macartney did never give any cause to be suspected a favorer of the late King James’s party in Ireland, or that he left any sume or sumes of money there relating to the Customes of Belfast or otherwise for ye use of the Ld Tyrconnell’s Army, or had any design so to do or to defraud their present Maties.” “On the contrary,” the Report goes on to say, “the sd Mr. Macartney was always reputed a zealous good Protestant and never in the least suspected to be a favourer of a Popish interest, but on the late Revolucon gave signall instances of the contrary by raising men, lending money, proclaiming their present Maties King and Queen of Ireland, and by joining wth the gentlemen there concerned for the Protestant interest, and consenting to their disposall of what publique money should come to his hands for the safety of the Protestant religion and the interest of their present Maties,—all wch is likewise solemnly attested under the hands of the Ld Mountalexander, Sr Wm Franklyn, Mr. Edwd Harrison, and Mr. Wm Shaw,” &c. The papers are rather interesting, in proof of the times, and the evidence of the loose charges brought forward by interested persons. George Macartney died before the case was closed, his eldest son James and his widow succeeding as his representatives to defend his name and memory, and three years after, it ended entirely in their favour. Mr. Peter Knowles had been made Collector of Belfast by King James’s party, and he proceeded, in accordance with Guest’s information, to possess himself of what money was to be found belonging, as he imagined, to the Revenue, and also “of Goods, houses, profitable mills, mault and Corne of the said Mr. Macartney.” The money, it was proved, was Mr. Macartney’s private funds,

## POTTINGER.

The next name of an important Belfast family, but also, like that of Macartney, now unknown here, is Pottinger—the most noted member of which, so far as the town is concerned, was Thomas, King James's Sovereign, and of whom much has been already written. Great materials, however, still exist regarding the Pottingers—too great, indeed, to be all included. Many members of this family not identified with Belfast have been greatly distinguished, chiefly in India, in a military and diplomatic capacity. It is a singular fact that two persons of Belfast origin, Lord Macartney and Sir Henry Pottinger, were concerned at different eras in establishing treaties with China, and in opening up a knowledge of that great empire. The career of Sir Henry Pottinger, a native of Belfast, was particularly honourable, successful, and distinguished in this regard. There is a mural monument to his memory in St. George's Church, Belfast—placed there by his brother, the late Colonel William Pottinger—recording his services, not at all in exaggerated terms.<sup>1</sup>

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as was, without dispute, the other property mentioned. The investigation is gone into very minutely, when £169 was the balance against Mr. Macartney in his accounts, after deducting £100 which Mr. Hamilton got of the public money for the Protestant cause. The executors were exonerated and discharged from the payment of the said £169 on account of "the great losses the Testator suffered in his private capacity under the comon calamities of Ireland." The seizure of Mr. Macartney's property after he had fled does not invalidate Pottinger's account of the immunity of the town from outrage in King James's time, Peter Knowles, the Collector for the latter, thinking he acted therein under legal authority; at least, it is not evidence of indiscriminate plunder.

<sup>1</sup> Edward Pottinger was stated to have been lost in the Dartmouth, in which he had sailed from Belfast, as related p. 179—confirmation of which was obtained from the Admiralty, and communicated to the writer by Colonel William Pottinger, who says—"I applied to the Admiralty some years ago, and in a courteous reply from Captain Henry Eden, R.N., then Secretary, I was informed that the Dartmouth was lost on the night of the 9th December, 1690, with every soul on board, on the Maiden rocks. This statement is not strictly correct, for I have heard my father say that his grandfather remembered an old man begging about the end of the Long Bridge who came ashore lashed to a hen-coop, and who was lame from injuries received on being dashed against the rocks." Let this latter statement be accurate or not, there is no doubt that Edward Pottinger lost his life about the time and in the manner described, which is confirmed by two Belfast wills recently examined in the Record Office, Dublin. The first is that of Jane Pooley, widow



The family is at present represented by Major-General Thomas Pottinger, of Mount Pottinger, County Leitrim; but Mount-pottinger, in the County Down portion of Belfast, and Pottinger's Entry, in High Street, where their place of business was, alone preserve a name in the town once so influential and peculiar. Of Thomas Pottinger much information is obtainable from *Pres-*

of John Pooley, "chirurgion," who executed her will in 1690, making "her well beloved friend Captain Edward Potinger her executor," showing that he was then living; the other, that of the Countess Dowager of Donegall, dated 1691, proving that he was then dead, from these words—"I give and bequeath to Mrs. Pottinger, widow of Captain Edward Pottinger of Belfast, £10 for a Ring or Piece of Plate."

The ship here mentioned was probably the same Dartmouth which was at Derry in 1689. It has been stated that Pottinger was the commander on that occasion. This is not correct, as the name of her captain, as stated in Professor Witherow's work (*Derry and Enniskillen*, p. 166), was Leake.

Edward Pottinger has also been credited with the honour of having commanded the ship which conveyed King William to Ireland. This is also an error. (See *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. i., p. 130, for the account of the King's arrival at Carrickfergus, which states that Captain Collins was the commander.)

The object of his going on this voyage is stated to have been to prevent the introduction from Scotland of any supplies for the late King James's party then in arms, agreeing also in that particular with the notice in the text. An article in *Good Words*, 1863, part vi., p. 445, entitled "Reminiscences of a Highland Parish," by Norman Macleod, D.D., takes up the romantic side of the event by professing to have discovered and by describing the grave of Edward Pottinger, and states that near it were found some of the guns of the lost Dartmouth. It is a picturesque narrative, but rather obscure, the introduction of the era and name of Oliver Cromwell making it chronologically inaccurate so far as Edward Pottinger was concerned.

These details, somewhat varying as to the date of the wreck, are supplemented by this extract from Charnock's *Biographia Navalis*, London, 1794 :—

"Pottinger, Edward. Was made Captain of the Dartmouth 19th March, 1690. This frigate was stationed as a cruiser off the western coast of Scotland. . . . A violent storm on the 9th October following forced her from her anchors and drove her on a rock in the Sound of the Isle of Mull. The vessel was totally lost, and to add to this disaster the Captain and the principal part of the crew were unfortunately drowned."

This corresponds more with Dr. Macleod's traditional account than the official notice from the Admiralty; and it would be interesting to think—and it really appears to be a well-founded story—that the cannons of the old ship which Edward Pottinger of Belfast had commanded, and which had been at the siege of Derry, should have been found a few years ago on a Scotch island, as well as the grave of the lost commander, accompanying a distinct tradition of the catastrophe.

For the reference to *Good Words* and the information derived from it, the author is indebted to Colonel Pottinger, not having consulted the work himself.



*byterian Loyalty*, but which, as well as the history of the family in late days, it is impossible to enter into. The papers printed in the General History, p. 165, place the character of Thomas Pottinger in a new light; and they, with others in the Record Office, London, show that he was a Commissioner for Prizes in Belfast, and that his exertions were accepted and appreciated by the Government; but the nature of that office is not defined, though nothing discreditable was attached to it. The usual statement regarding Pottinger is that his acceptance of the office of King James's Sovereign did not meet with the approbation of his co-religionists. He is thus referred to by them as a sort of vindication of themselves:—

“Being reflected on for not showing some mark of Disesteem or Popular Resentment of Mr. Pottinger's Behaviour against the Liberties of the Corporation, this should rather fall, if there be any ground of Reflection, on those of the Communion of the Established Church, for when Mr. Pottinger returned to Belfast none but Conformists were Burgesses; and it being proper for them as the Representatives of the Corporation to resent the injuries done it. . . . But the true reasons why none of us have moved in the matter were, because Mr. Pottinger, having been a considerable Dealer in Town, and now in declining Age (near 80) as well as circumstances, and being marry'd in a Family of good Respect, Interest, and Loyalty, Protestants of all Persuasions wav'd taking any notice of the matter, farther than declaring in all Companies and on all Occasions, and frequently to his face, that they did not Approve but Condemn the said Practice.”

The High Church writer who drew forth this vindication from Dr. Kirkpatrick, his Presbyterian opponent, had thus, in his general attack on the Presbyterians, characterised Pottinger:—

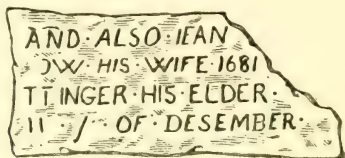
“There was one Pottinger, a Profess'd Presbyterian, an inhabitant of Belfast, who, when King James was in Ireland, proved a zealous and avowed Jacobite, and made Interest to have the Old Charter of that town broken and a new one granted. . . . This same Pottinger left Belfast soon after the Troubles, and liv'd for many years in London, a known and profess'd Factor for the Jacobites there.”—*Presbyterian Loyalty*, pp. 423, 425.

These statements are not sustained by the papers printed in this work, pp. 166-67.

The Pottingers were in a good position in Belfast when the Revolution arose, and the asseverations of the disputatious theologians must be taken as rather rhetorical,—at any rate not supported by the decisions of properly constituted tribunals after the events. Pottinger appears to have greatly served the town when King James's party was in possession; and with equal attention, zeal, and acceptance when Schomberg ruled. A certain party could never be reconciled to his irregular or illegal position as Sovereign of the town. Further extension of the subject here would be unnecessary, as there is something more to be disclosed about this family of an entirely new and original description. The late Colonel Pottinger persistently declared that they were settled in Belfast long before 1662, the time when the name first appears in the Records, his evidence for such fact being that when he was a boy he saw an immense tomb or monument in the old graveyard in High Street, in Belfast, having on it an inscription, recording it as the burial-place of a Pottinger, under the date of 1602. Farther, that seeing the destruction the tomb was certain to suffer, as others had done, at the rebuilding of the Church then in progress, the family determined to have it removed to a more secure retreat; that so ponderous was it, that forty cars were needed to draw it away to Kilmore, in County Down. An investigation within the last few months has proved the truth of the story of the removal of the tomb. It is really in Kilmore graveyard, but dilapidated a second time, so much so as to make a date of 1602 undiscoverable, but on the outside is this inscription, made at the time of its removal from Belfast to its present location:—

“The Burying Place of the Pottingers since 1602  
being destroyed by building the Church in Belfast  
in 1813—Part of the old Tomb was removed here  
out of respect to the memory of Charlotte Pottinger  
whose remains lie in the adjoining Grave.”

The informant<sup>1</sup> regarding this interesting old Belfast tomb farther states that, besides the modern inscription here copied, "the roof of the vault appeared to be partially composed of fragments of the old tomb, and on one of these I found the following words. They were almost illegible, but I will endeavour to give you as clear an idea as possible of what is on the stone." This is the inscription:—



All this conveys but little. The stone has been broken round the edges, and continuity destroyed. The interesting point in connection with this monument is—did it present, when perfect, a date of 1602? The inscription of 1813 repeats what the Pottinger family affirm at this day—that they were in Belfast in 1602, and that the tomb expressed the interment of a member of it in that year; and it would have been quite impossible they could have cut letters on a stone in 1813 as expressing what had been on another of 1602, if such had not been the fact. It is a most curious point, for two reasons. One is, that it would prove the Pottingers to be older than any family connected with the town; and the other, that the town itself, to which Con O'Neill was sending his servants, in 1603, from Castlereagh to buy wine, was possibly a better place than has hitherto been generally thought at that early period; and that a Pottinger, from the size and expensiveness of his sepulchral monument, and taking other things in proportion, may really have been in magisterial authority, the first dispenser of justice in the community, as they traditionally aver, before Chichester had become possessed of it, and before a Corporation under a Charter with

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Creery, son of the Rev. Andrew Creery, Incumbent of Kilmore, County Down, who with great kindness caused the vault to be cleaned out, the stones scraped, and sent me the inscriptions as copied by himself.

Sovereign and Burgesses had existence. This will be received as but conjectural, the date of 1681 on the monument having alone been discovered.

### KNOX.

Thomas Knox was one of the old seventeenth century merchants of Belfast, and was ancestor of the Earl of Ranfurly. This family had an exalted Scottish origin; their history is related at length in the Peerage volumes,<sup>1</sup> but the Belfast connection is entirely omitted. Debrett carries Thomas, the Irish head of the house, at once to Dungannon, saying "he came into Ireland and settled at Dungannon, in the county of Tyrone;" he should have said that he came into Ireland and settled at Belfast, in the county of Antrim—such being the fact, though the exact year is not known. "On the 21st January, 1669, Thomas Knox, merchant, is admitted a free Commoner and merchant of the staple in Belfast;" he was Sovereign of the town in 1685; and his address to the collective wisdom, in 1697, on resigning his Burgess-ship, and announcing his departure from among them, is written in the Records in the following proper and unmistakable terms. He says—

"Whereas I have now changed the place of my residence and removed from Belfast to Dungannon where I cannot be so useful or serviceable to the Corporation as my inclinations do lead me, and my place of a Burgess doth require, I do therefore resign my place of Burgess into the hands of the Rt. Hon. Arthur Earl of Donegall Sovereign of the said Borough and to the rest of the Burgesses to be by them disposed of as in justice and equity they shall think fit. As witness my hand the 17th October 1697,

"THOMAS KNOX."<sup>2</sup>

The estate which Mr. Knox thus purchased was a portion of the Donegall possessions at Dungannon, acquired by the Lord Deputy nearly a century before. The purchase but a very short time preceded the resignation.

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<sup>1</sup> See Sir Bernard Burke, Debrett, and Betham.

<sup>2</sup> *Corporate Records.*

## LEGGE.

The Legges were a trading family in Belfast in the last century. They were not known in the seventeenth century as holding any corporate office. Their relatives, or distant connections, claim for them now a high antiquity, asserting that they were seated in Malone in the time of Henry the Eighth; that one of them returned to England, from whom is descended Legge, Earl of Dartmouth; and that the Legge who, with two other persons, accompanied Charles the First in his flight from Hampton Court to the Isle of Wight, was a son or nephew of the Irish member of the house, who lived in Malone. It is a marvellous narrative, if it could be supported by documentary evidence. Nothing of that kind has as yet come under notice; but it is a certain fact that they were in Malone in 1703, the will of Mr. Eccles of Malone bequeathing Mr. Legge "a ginny" as a peace-offering and compensation if any dispute should occur on account of their lands "marching." The probability therefore entirely is, that the Legges were in Malone very much earlier than 1703. The name sometimes occurs in the *State Papers*, but no indication is given therein that any there mentioned were of Irish nativity, much less that they were resident in Malone. Thus William Legge, Esq., petitions in 1691, as one of Charles the Second's servants, for a share of the £6000 about to be distributed among them. This might be a presumptive proof that the service rendered for such compensation was considerable; such, indeed, as the assistance given to Charles the First when flying from his enemies; but it contains not the most distant allusion to the extraction or birth-place of the petitioner.<sup>1</sup> A somewhat curious narrative occurs in another *State Paper* with respect to one of the name of Legge, but which also leaves the genealogy of the individual untouched, and is of no avail in establishing the point here sought for. In a letter from the Lord-Deputy Fitzwilliam to Sir George Carew, dated Dundalk, 1st July, 1591, the following passage occurs:—

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<sup>1</sup> *Treasury Papers*, 1557-1696, vol. xvii, No. 22.

“And for Legges report (which I am told is common) that I should so beat him and tread him under my feet till he was almost dead and struck two of his best teeth out of his head is most untrue, for upon my credit, if I be worth any honesty or belief, I laid no hand upon him, but having seven or eight sheets of paper, holding them longways in my hand, I confess I did so lift up his nose with them as I think the gristle of his nose ached with it, and sure I am it bled. I will not tell you how knavishly he dealt with me and my daughter Mary in speeches, besides that he did scorn me with his smiling and laughing.”<sup>1</sup>

The Christian name of the Legge so scurvily treated is not mentioned, but in the *Peerage* is this passage:—

“William Legge, going into Ireland *m* Anne only daughter of John, son of Miles, Lord Birmingham. He died at the advanced age of 90.”

Did he live in Ireland during all this long life, and where? He was succeeded by his son George; George was succeeded by his son William, *who was brought out of Ireland* by his godfather, Lord Danby; William was succeeded by his son George, who was first elevated to the Peerage in 1682, by the title of Baron of Dartmouth.<sup>2</sup>

According to this abstract, the Dartmouth family did really descend from a Legge who left Ireland. It appears that the William Legge *who was brought out of Ireland*, the third above-named, was a most enthusiastic royalist, a personal attendant on King Charles the First, “and eminently distinguished by his faithful attachment to the royal cause before and after the murder of the King.”<sup>3</sup> He died in 1672, so could not have been the petitioner for a portion of the £6000. There is an entire confusion about the story, to add to which the notice of the family in the *Landed Gentry* is, “that in 1676 William Legge, an officer in the army, served under the Duke of Schomberg in Flanders, and accompanied him to Ireland in 1690.” This was probably communicated by the late William Wallace Legge, Esq., as all he knew about the matter.

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers*, Carew, 1589–1600, p. 57.

<sup>2</sup> *Burke's Peerage and Baronetage*; Art. Dartmouth.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*



This will, perhaps, be all considered as little else than grasping at straws; but there may be a foundation of truth in the vague story told by very respectable persons indeed now residing in Malone. It must be understood that it is only thrown out here to attract notice and excite inquiry. The traditional account and that in the *Peerage* concur in some broad features; but it would be essential to discover that the first William Legge mentioned in the *Peerage* resided in Malone, which, if it could be done, would place the Legge history as connected with this locality on a firm basis. In its present state it is not to be received, wanting contemporary documents, however strongly believed in, and supported by several incidental proofs here omitted, by individuals living in Malone, whose ancestors have been there for several generations, and who were related to the Legges.

#### ECCLES.

It is not known what relationship, if any, existed between Mr. Eccles who lived at the Rookery, otherwise Cranmore or Orange Grove, at the end of the seventeenth century, and Hugh Eccles of Belfast. The latter would have been the more likely of the two to have been able to raise, in conjunction with the Sovereign, as it is traditionally related that he did, the money which William received as a contribution from the town. Mr. John Eccles, however, who lived in Malone in 1690, was he who received the King in his house on his way to the Boyne. This has been often mentioned, and there is a most excellent account of the event and many collateral circumstances in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*,<sup>1</sup> from which this brief passage is extracted:—

“About two miles from Belfast the King was overtaken by a heavy shower of rain. Observing some large trees near the road he took shelter under one of them, when Mr. Eccles the owner of the place requested the King and his staff to honour him by making use of his house. The invitation was accepted and his Majesty partook of some

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. i., p. 134.

refreshment. As the rain continued, and the King was suffering from headache, he reposed himself for a few hours."

This is all quite correct; at least something like it has been received as true since the date of its occurrence. The jug out of which William drank, and the bed on which he reposed, were long preserved in the house. The son of this Mr. Eccles, either for this act of hospitality or from the acquaintanceship thus formed, or else from the activity of his presumed relative of the same name in Belfast in raising money for the King's necessities, was befriended by him. It is believed that he went to Dublin, of which he ultimately rose to be the Collector of Customs, and in the history of that city Sir John Eccles, Knt., is mentioned as Lord Mayor in 1710.<sup>1</sup> Little doubt can be entertained that he was son of Mr. Eccles of Malone. Eccles Street in the metropolis was called after his name. He acquired wealth, and his son was known to have visited his relatives in Malone in the middle or latter end of the last century. The name is not now known in the town in any prominent position, but the general facts of the story may be supposed to be quite correct.

There are perhaps none of the seventeenth century men whose names are particularly identified with Belfast so important as the preceding. But there are many persons mentioned in the Records as living in that century whose wills are still to be found, some in fragments, some worn and illegible with age, but in general insipid and without any marked characteristics. But still the wills both of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are a vast repertory of information, and their close examination is indispensable, it may be well understood, to form a complete history of the old inhabitants of the town, to supply the wants of other quarters, or to give a hint now and then which a genuine inquirer will follow with avidity, and bring out of darkness new and important facts.

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<sup>1</sup> Walsh's *History of Dublin*.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## SEVENTEENTH CENTURY AND OLD TOPOGRAPHY.

Y<sup>T</sup> would be all but impossible to conceive what the aspect <sup>A</sup> was, six hundred years ago, of the place on which the town of Belfast now stands. On the higher and all the firm ground was the primeval forest. On the lower, a waste spread on all sides, produced by the unrestrained tidal water, united with the floods from the surrounding mountains. There appeared within the bounds of what is at this day the modern town, when unmingled with the swelling tide so as to be undistinguishable, two small rivers running to the sea—not exactly parallel, but flowing in the same direction, and having between them a portion of ground thrown up by the watery commotion—"a spit" of sand it might at first have been, but acquiring by time some elevation and consistency. This narrow bank offered a favourable site for the small Castle and primitive Church which were accordingly placed upon it, not far distant from each other. One of these rivers was called, in early and in comparatively late days, the Owen Varra; in times still more recent the Blackstaff, sometimes the Blackwater. The other stream runs from the mountains, and in its course passes behind Mill Street and Castle Street, down the entire length of the present High Street, to the sea, and was known by the name of the Farset—"the river of Ferst" of Queen Elizabeth's day—and subsequently, from its position and usefulness, and by way of distinction, the river of Belfast.

Of these two small rivers, so peculiarly identified with the ancient topography of Belfast, the Farset rises on Squire's Hill, and in its meandering course encircles the old churchyard and burying-place of Shankill. The Blackstaff is probably the

larger stream of the two, being increased by the Clowney Water and some other mountain affluents. It originally entered the Lagan much higher up towards the town than the present outlet, its course from the old paper mill to the great river or Lagan being artificial. In its original state it presented on some occasions the appearance of a broad estuary, hardly to be distinguished from the Lagan itself; its bed formed at other times little more than a swamp, or unsightly mud bank, of great extent. Ages before the almost parallel direction of the two town rivers had been interfered with, the narrow point of land between them had been formed, reaching up at least from the present St. George's Church to Castle Street. This little peninsula, protected on one side by the sea, on others accessible probably by temporary causeways, thus became a place of considerable security. The marsh, or waste ground, often inundated, must, in this conjectural view of the topographical features of the site of the future town, have encompassed it on the remaining sides, till it met the high ground at the north and east. On the lower part, here described as a swamp or permanently covered with water, the great town of the present day has been almost entirely erected, all on reclaimed ground. Even in very dark ages, however, some little life must have been communicated to the place by its natural situation, and by the ford or fords which here crossed the river, and obtained for it some degree of notice. But there was no industry, no civilisation, nor anything worthy of the name of a town for centuries succeeding our imaginary standpoint of six hundred years ago.

In the General History the era of the great queen has been taken as the dividing line between a certain degree of barbarism and an incipient civilisation, so to that period must be assigned, not the reality, but the bare proposal for a town at Belfast. When it is found that in Elizabeth's reign Carrickfergus itself, the most noted place in Ulster, and a corporation at the time of some antiquity, contained but a few small square towers, near which were twelve or fifteen houses with doors, windows, and sloping roofs, and forty or fifty cabins resembling the round, or

what are called the bee-hive huts of the primitive inhabitants,<sup>1</sup> we may well conceive what the puny efforts of Belfast must have been in the same direction, in the time, for example, of the Earl of Essex. He was here for too short a time, and was too much thwarted in his endeavours, to complete any considerable pacific measure. Scattered huts around the Castle and the Church, without order or method, alone formed the town of Belfast in those days.

The annexed map is a confirmation of this, but not absolutely so, as nearly a century later Sir William Petty makes his map of Belfast and the entire Barony, in which the town is equally a nonentity, though such was contrary to the fact. Both had in view only the delineation of broad features. This early map may be entitled, "A Plan of Carrickfergus Bay and the Surrounding Country," and was made some time in Queen Elizabeth's reign. The delineator represents the now great town by a single castle, hardly even in regular castellated form, but almost an unshapely mass amid the bright green woods.<sup>2</sup> The two rivers, the Blackstaff and the Farset, are not drawn with accuracy, and the general aspect of the topographical condition of the vicinity of the present town conveys little information. Such, however, was the appearance of land and water to the draughtsman of the day, and it discloses some rather interesting facts, however much wanting in full details.

The year 1590 is on the outside of the map in a modern hand, and only in pencil; and, to make it more obvious that this date is but a conjecture, a query follows it. No proof is afforded therefore, from this circumstance, of the real age of the map, but one most competent to judge<sup>3</sup> has stated that "it seems to have

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<sup>1</sup> For a map of Carrickfergus showing this, see the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. iii., p. 276.

<sup>2</sup> There is a copy of this map in the library of the Harbour Office, Belfast. It is painted all green, as is the original in the Record Office, London, from the latter of which the copy for this work was taken with great care in 1874.

<sup>3</sup> Hans C. Hamilton, Esq., of the Record Office, London, editor of some of the volumes of *State Papers* issued in late years, and who has rendered assistance on the above point and some others in the present chapter.





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been made before November, 1574, and while Sir Brian O'Neill was still alive." Its age might therefore more probably be about 1570.

The Castle of "Bellfaste" marks the site of the town; the Owen Varra and the Farset, on the County Antrim side, wander at will through the peaceful solitudes. The large river called here F. Leganda is the Lagan Water, and to it are appended the following words, which, it may be taken for granted, are faithfully descriptive in the Elizabethan age of the country now teeming with all the evidences of the highest wealth and civilisation:—"Alonge this river by y<sup>e</sup> space of 26 miles groweth much woodes as well Okes for Tymber as hother woodde, wich maie be brought in the baie of Cragfargus with bote or by dragge."

The general features of the locality are recognisable. Benmadigang, or, as here written, Benmadiane, one of the favourite retreats or fastnesses of the O'Neills, and a not less favoured haunt in our own time of the juveniles and other inhabitants of Belfast, is described as "Hill with a Cave"—its modern designation almost unchanged. Benmadigang has several caves, but the yawning mouth of that which is best known and most accessible, and which was in long distant years a distinguishing landmark, is delineated rather beyond its true dimensions. Close to this famous hill is "Kerne Money"—the modern Carnmoney; above it is "Kerne Shalgue," rendered Hunting Hill; and near it is "Knockamore," or Great Hill. Higher up again is "Claien-deboie,"—that is, Clannaboye, the common name of all the district. The two small castles, or piles,<sup>1</sup> on the shore

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<sup>1</sup> It is curious to read of the subsequent possessors of many places marked on this map. In June, 1692, tenants holding leases here under the Earl of Donegall are thus mentioned:—

"Skegenearle and quarter of Listillyard. William Wareing.

"Ballyohagan. Jane Pegg, widow.

"Old Park and New Enclosure. Edwd. Reynell, Gilbert Wye, Francis Thetford, John Clarke, and others.

"Townlands of Ballysillan, and Outerard, with the mountains belonging: One half of the townland of Listillyard, and part of Cloughnecastella in the New Park, and three parts of Cloughnecastella. George Martin."

Cloughnecastella is that marked on the map by nearly a similar title, the

between Belfast and Carrickfergus are also marked, and are now known under more modern names than the very lengthened titles bestowed on them in the map. Yet nearer to Belfast, on the other side, is Freestone. This is Friar's Bush; and the religious houses once standing in that neighbourhood are drawn with sufficient minuteness. Other names more distant from Belfast, and therefore outside the present subject, can in general be readily read and understood.

Independently of the information on old local topography which this map affords, it presents a few other collateral features requiring notice. The three small lines in the corner at the extreme left, so obscure and illegible, mean—

“’astell Raie or graie  
Sr. Brian  
Mach Felim.”

This was Sir Brian MacFelim O'Neill; and the site, as far as the limner could depict it, is that of Castlereagh, overlooking the woods of Belfast, and appropriated here to him who was the most important of the name in this locality. This Irish chief, of whom so much has been written, was best known here by the familiar name of Sir Brian, but when spoken of in England was called Sir Brian M'Felim. The word “graie” is more difficult of explanation. Its introduction in the manner in which it is placed would almost imply that it was a common appellation given to him by his contemporaries, descriptive of personal appearance or some accidental peculiarity. Other conjectures have been made as to its meaning, but the most probable explanation is that the word refers to the structure, and is

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Greencastle of modern days, one of the “little piles” frequently mentioned in the history of the time. The other farther from Belfast is considered to have been at Whitehouse, where the ruins of a square tower still exist. (See *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. iii., p. 83.) The former was the better known, and was distinctly called in the year 1603, in the first Chichester patent, “the ruinous Castle of Cloghmycastally.” Before either of them was ruined they were occupied and described as “two little Piles in the Bottom beneath the Cave.” This would hardly describe the situation of both piles, but in a general way may have been deemed sufficiently descriptive.



corroborative therefore of the etymology of Castlereagh, which means Gray Castle.

The term, Bay of Knockfergus, is omitted in its proper place on the map. Belfast Lough, its frequent and more modern title, was unknown. "Lough Maghergie" denotes this now famous estuary. This had reference to Islandmagee, a favourite locality from the earliest times. It is marked here quite in the wrong situation, but the pen is drawn through the words as if to rectify the error.

The original of this map has undergone the scrutiny of Lord Burghley; those in the Public Record Office familiar with his writing having stated that the words "Rand Og," "Port Muck," and "McGyes Iland" were all written by that eminent personage.<sup>1</sup>

From this map and other proofs, it may be inferred that the town took no shape till the time of Sir Arthur Chichester, though some of the now old streets—as North Street and Mill Street, for instance—may have been paths or roadways previously through the waste fields. Before the Corporation was formed a beginning was certainly made, and two years after the Charter was granted Lord Chichester gave to John Vesey, the first Sovereign of Belfast, a tenement in the High or Great Street of the town, with several acres of land in connection therewith in the fields of Belfast.<sup>2</sup> This is a proof that the town was about this time being laid out, evidence of which has been already given, but there is no map at this rising era to acquaint us with its form or primitive condition.

The exigencies of war first bring out tolerably correct ideas of what Belfast was in the middle of the seventeenth century. The Civil Wars produced a necessity for defensive works, and accord-

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<sup>1</sup> This statement is made by an experienced person in the Record Office, London, and concurred in by Mr. Hans C. Hamilton.

<sup>2</sup> The following is a copy of John Vesey's grant:—

"Dnus Chichester etiam p. chart' feoffament' geren' date 13 Jan' 1615 feoffavit Joh. Veysey gen' de pcell' ter' jacen' in Platea vil' de Belfast al' pcell contin' 9½ ac' & 1 Rod ter' jacen' in campis de Belfast pd' modo vel nup in tenur' dict' Joh Veysey cu suis membr' et ptn, hend pd Joh' hered et assign' s imppet &c." Inquisitions, Jas. 1st, 1615.



ingly, in 1642, the town was made secure by a wet ditch and earthen rampart. Stones were employed at some places, as at the gates and bastions, but the general character was that here mentioned. The circuit of the rampart and area of the town are described with precision in the following words made from the annexed map of 1660, the oldest known on which to found such calculations:—

“Length of Fortifications from A to B = 1855 yds., or 1 mile 95 yds.  
 Circumference of Town along Fortifications from A to B, 1510 yds.,  
 or  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile 190 yds.  
 On east side, ... .. 1100 yds.

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Total Circumference = 2610 yds.,  
 or  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles nearly.

Area of Town exclusive of Castle Grounds and Gardens = 70 Acres.  
 Area of Castle Grounds and Gardens ... .. = 16 Acres.

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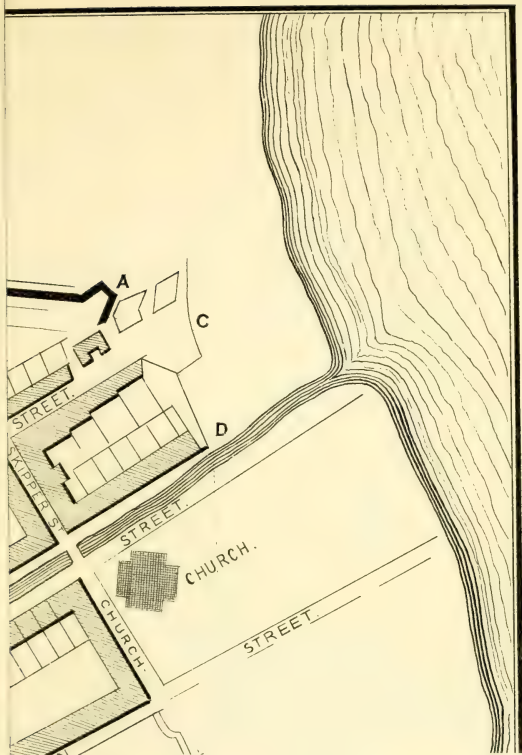
Total of Town and Castle Grounds = 86 Acres.”<sup>1</sup>

From this it would seem that 86 acres comprised the entire area of the town, encompassed by the rampart and the sea or river. Deducting from this 16 acres for the gardens and appurtenances of the Castle, and a farther acreage for the waste ground next the river and elsewhere within the rampart, it may be judged how small a space was actually covered by the diminutive town of Belfast in 1660.

The line C D E is imaginary. The river or sea was the boundary on that side; no rampart there existed or was required; it was mere waste, and often covered with water. When the rampart was made in 1642, the town was still more inconsiderable, and had fewer marked features. Within this compass, however, there were but five streets, now called High Street, Bridge Street, North Street, Waring Street, and Skipper Street; three or four others in which houses were partially erected, and a

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<sup>1</sup> This account of the size of Belfast and its topographical features has been made out and written by William Hastings, Esq., C.E., Belfast, from the measurement of the map of 1660.



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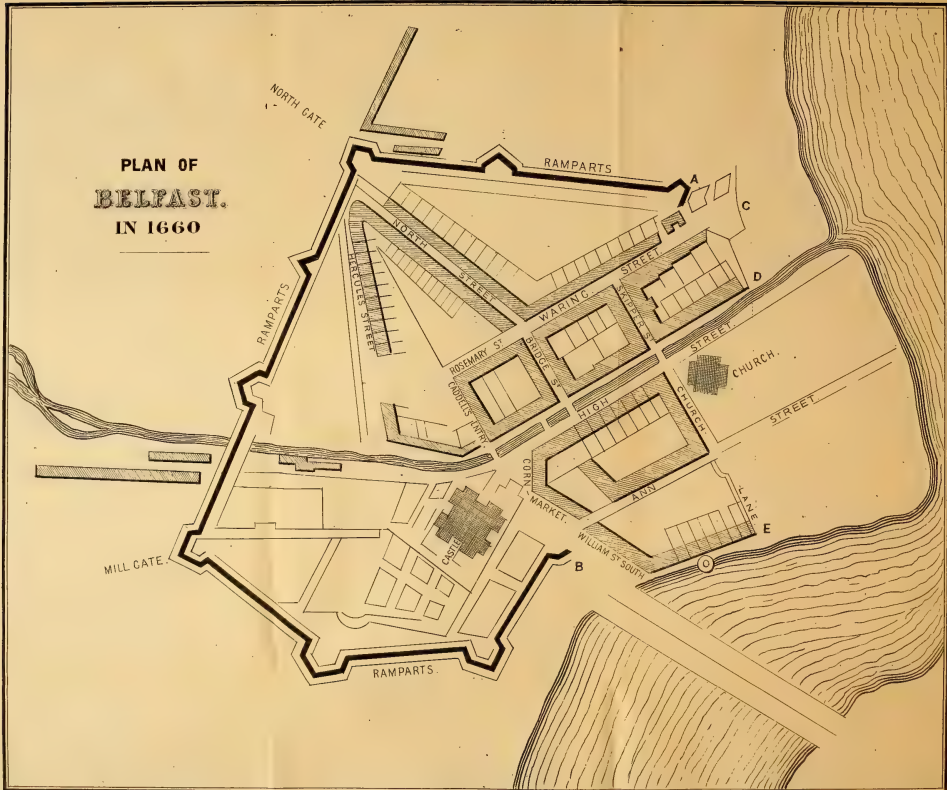
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PLAN OF  
BELFAST.  
IN 1660





few buildings outside the rampart. The entire forms the merest nucleus of the modern town, though these few original streets are not only still well known, but are at this day its almost ever-moving centre. The course of the rampart was thus described more than fifty years ago, and though there are a few errors, the whole may be taken as nearly correct, except in those instances which lapse of time has altered, or rendered applicable no more :—

“The rampart from the North Gate ran in a straight line to Chapel Lane (Mill Street), where stood the Mill Gate, part of the walls and arch of which remained within the memory of many persons living. It then passed on nearly in the course of the present Queen Street,<sup>1</sup> when it turned and proceeded to the ground on which the Linen Hall now is, thence to its termination at the water not far from the old May’s Dock. Between the extreme points here named there were three bastions ; and the rampart continued till 1784 with many trees on its banks which had been planted at the Revolution, and had attained a great size. In the opposite direction from the North Gate the rampart ran for a short distance nearly parallel with John Street, turned down Donegall Street, crossed Talbot Street, and terminated again at the water beyond Mary Street.”

The turn off John Street and the number of bastions mentioned in this description are not altogether in accordance with

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<sup>1</sup> It has been stated by a very competent inquirer that Fountain Street was the course of the rampart after it left Mill Gate, and that proof of such was found some years ago when excavating ground in that street. But this must have been some connecting link. The main rampart proceeded in the direction of Queen Street, and very much in the course of that street, which diverges a little to the right in passing up it from Chapel Lane, or rather from the old site of Mill Gate. This is its distinct course from that gate, as shown on the map of 1660 ; and if farther proof be wanting, there are persons still living who have seen in their boyhood what was understood as a part of the old rampart of the town in the direction described. It is difficult to revive the memory of things that have so long passed away, or to discover, in its radically changed condition, the spot where this remaining portion of the rampart was ; but College Street, which diverges to the right about half-way up the present Queen Street, was crossed by the old rampart not extremely distant from what is now College Square East at its northern end—it was a stagnant water, not less than fourteen or fifteen feet in breadth—and this was probably about the place at which the rampart varied its course to proceed in the direction of the Linen Hall.



the map. Though this is said to have been an account of the rampart as received from old inhabitants at the time it was written, it cannot well be reconciled with discoveries since of apparent defences both inside and outside the line here described. The most probable way to explain this is, that subsequently to the original formation of the town ditch, changes or additions had been made to improve or strengthen it. Only one definite proof has been found of this, and which will probably explain some points that have hitherto appeared contradictory. In September, 1671, it is recorded—

“That, taking into consideration the Presentments of three several Grand Juries all urging the necessity of repairing the course of the back water belonging to the Mills and the same brought to the Rampier near the North Gate, and from thence on the back side of the North Street as low as the house of Henry Thetford in the said street, and from thence all along the present Sovereign’s new Plantation. And the same to be repaired and maintained from time to time at the cost and charges of the inhabitants of the said North Street. It is ordered, finding a great necessity of doing the said work, and the use it may be in time of necessity and otherwise, that the said work be forthwith repaired and made up by the said inhabitants of the North Street, and for the future to be maintained and kept up from time to time at their only cost and charges. This is to stand and remain for a Bye Law for ever.

“WILLIAM WARING, Sovereign.”<sup>1</sup>

Identification of all the localities here mentioned would be necessary thoroughly to explain the meaning of this “Bye Law for ever.” In after days the Plantation, which referred to houses, and the Back Rampart were places very frequently named, but are no way explanatory of the line of fortification.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

<sup>2</sup> An idea may be formed of the meaning of the entry regarding this flowing of the water at the back of North Street by accepting the explanation obscurely afforded by the *Records*, that the river running from the mill, and which was certainly the source from which the rampart received its supply, was intercepted or partially broken at the Mill Gate, and made to flow round and outside the rampart to the North Gate, and there either united again with it, or was carried in a separate course at the back of the houses in the lower part of North Street to

The Rampart was broken in its course by three gates. The North Gate led to Antrim and Carrickfergus—to the former town directly forward over Peter's Hill, to the latter turning to the right across Carrick Hill. The Mill Gate led to Lisburn and other towns in that direction by Sandy Row and Durham Street, which formed the entrance into the town from that side within memory. The third gate opened out on the strand not far from Waring Street. The map of 1660, first made commonly known in 1823, and which is now on so many documents and in numerous offices, has been said to refer to a later date than that hitherto assigned to it, and to be really founded on the great and official one made by Phillips in 1685, presently to be described.<sup>1</sup> This may be doubtful, and at any rate would require proofs and explanations not now possible to recover from any contemporary documents. An error was, however, committed in not recognising, in 1823, the passage over the water in the map of 1660 as the causeway across the Owen Varra, or Blackstaff, which, expanded as the river there appears from its present proportions, subsequent discussion has tended to establish. It was not a bridge in the ordinary acceptance of the term, but a substantial embankment across the sluggish water. It was con-

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the Sovereign's new plantation, which was on each side of old Mary Street or Cow Lane. The position of Henry Thetford's house in North Street, if known, would tend to explain the matter.

<sup>1</sup> The map of 1660 has been a source of much uncertainty. Mr. Pinkerton considered its date a mistaken one, and in a private letter received from him a great many years since explicitly expresses his disbelief in its correctness, saying—"There was a plan of Belfast published by Moll about 1713 on the margin of a map of Ireland." This marginal map, he says, was founded on Phillips's ground plan of 1685. "It found its way into Rapin's *History*, and subsequently into Dubourdieu's *County of Antrim*, where I believe it got, for the first time, the description of being a plan of 1660." The reader must judge for himself, if disposed to investigate it, the amount of proof which the above affords. In few words, Mr. Pinkerton's contention is, that the map of 1685 is the real foundation of that of 1660, which was also made in 1685, or even later, but adopted to suit, in the maker's judgment, what he conceived Belfast may have been a quarter of a century earlier. Any reader will probably be quite competent to form a better judgment on this opinion, also on the course of the rampart as described, on the size of the town, or any other topographical feature, by an examination of the maps in this work, than by the verbal descriptions of another.

structed at the same time as the rampart, and is the only place which can be looked for, so far as the writer is aware, as that which is frequently mentioned afterwards as the Great Bridge of Belfast, and that before the late famous Long Bridge of the town was built. The map of 1660 shows this Great Bridge,<sup>1</sup> but it is absent from that of 1685, and the former must therefore be taken, on any calculation, as within a few years of the date expressed. If not strictly correct as to time, it gives a fair ground plan of the town as it stood about the era of the Restoration and a few years after it. No large distinct buildings are laid down upon it but the Castle and the Church, the structures which had stood there for many generations. There is no Meeting-house nor any other public edifice; for though some such must have existed, they were too humble to be worthy of representation beside the Castle and the Church. The fine map of 1685 here represented is much more complete than that of 1660; and a description or an examination of its ample proportions will fully bring into view the size and material condition of the town as it was near the termination of the seventeenth century. It shows the town larger than that of

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<sup>1</sup> It may be mentioned that many very well qualified persons, with some spirit of inquiry and observation, have naturally turned their attention to the great changes and improvements which time has brought about in the topographical condition of Belfast; and in letters, lectures, and addresses, have brought to light in late years, from memory, old legal documents, or other sources, a number of original and interesting facts. The best of these is probably that written by Charles H. Brett, Esq., and read before the Belfast Literary Society, and which has supplied some notes on topographical subjects to the present work. The following extract from it is appropriate to the seventeenth century topography:—

“The Castle would defend the passage over the Ford at Belfast, and likewise the Bridge over the river of Owynvarra between the Malone and Belfast. The river Owynvarra here referred to is the present Blackstaff, which, at that time, flowed as a broad estuary into the Lagan, extending in width from somewhere about the north side of the present Police Square, to somewhere about the middle of Joy Street on the south. This broad estuary formed a complete defence to the southern side of Belfast Castle, and it appears to have been crossed only by an embankment made with piles, from which the Irish word *Owynvarra* (River of the Stake or Staff) and the English word *Blackstaff* are said to be derived.”

1660—just such increase as might have been expected in twenty-five years. The defences are somewhat changed, and it presents several features which are necessarily absent from the smaller map. The Castle is represented in full splendour, with its gates, towers, and gardens. The Market House, known by its steeple, is close to the chief gate of the lordly mansion, and beside what was the main entrance to it, the same being still preserved, and daily trodden by a thousand feet, in the passage which leads from Corn Market to the Castle Market of the present day. The old Long Bridge, which in another generation will be little more than a tradition among the ordinary population, is seen in process of being built, the centre still open, and completed arches at each end. The “New Cut River,” as it is called, with blue water on the coloured copy of the map, seems to be intended as an improvement or extension of the original rampart, and is very nearly the line of what was known in modern days as May’s Dock, a canal up to the Castle; thus making water communication from the gardens to the sea, or rather to the Lagan. Inside the “Sea Banck” the map exhibits a kind of swamp made by the Blackstaff. So wonderful have been the changes on these swamps, mud-banks, long-reaching strands, and tortuous streams, that any indisputable precision of description is impossible. The streets which are most completely filled with houses are High Street, Waring Street, and North Street, the last up only as far as the town gate. Gardens are attached to the houses everywhere, being particularly close, and apparently more than commonly ornamental, on what was then the space between High Street and Waring Street. The expression, “the old works,” nearly where John Street is, would imply that a removal of the rampart or some change in it had either been projected or made there. It seems indeed to have ended in 1685 at that place, or to have entered on strand or water. The river is crossed only by four bridges, though in the map of 1660 there are five, which cannot otherwise be explained than by supposing that some of them being originally of wood, or not of very solid construction, temporary changes were frequently taking place.

One would like to know the name of the occupant of the spacious house, and to all appearance handsomely laid out grounds and gardens, at the top of Mill Street and the beginning of Barrack Street. Might it have been the country residence of George Macartney, who had all the mills near, and who makes occasional reference to his new house? The turn or half-round in the street is yet preserved, in some respects similar to that on the map enclosing these ornamental grounds. They included Lettice Hill, and just adjoined "My Lord's Meadows," both, it cannot be doubted, in those days rural retirements, with the sweet scent of summer flowers. Close by, the water-wheels of the mills are going merrily round; a little farther off is the great dam, to serve as a reservoir to the manor mill; still farther away, and on Peter's Hill, is an irregularly shaped enclosure with a circle in the centre, as if marking the spot for some sports or village games, or for some other now undiscoverable purpose.

The only Town Gate which has a marked appearance is that which is near Waring Street. There is a tower at each side protecting a closed entrance. It stood at the end of Mary Street, a little street which is still well remembered. Besides the evidence which the map affords of the place at which this gate was, it has been mentioned that there was a small piece of freehold in Mary Street which had passed from the Chichester family to the Crown for some public use, and supposed to be for the site of the gate and towers. This gate led to the "great stronde," and was of much service. Dobbs, in his account of the county of Antrim, thus explains its probable and frequent use in 1683:—"At low water the strand may be rid to Belfast, though for the most part there is no more of the strand made use of than from Belfast to Whitehouse." The change which this route has undergone, from a firm way to mud, is familiarly known; but even long after, and as a practice far into the eighteenth century, the writer was once informed by a trustworthy authority that the judges have been seen to proceed down Waring Street on their way to the Assizes at Carrickfergus, when the state of the tide permitted, to avoid the

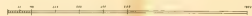




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A Bread 2794 feet in length



A Scale Containing one Thousand fms

South.

The Grand Plan of Belfast

by J. W. D. D. D.

June 1852

Copied by H. S. Barton. 1860.

Lagan River.

The Lagan River

Imperial road made out to the Strand.

Imperial road made out to the Strand.

The New Cut River

Belfast River

Sea Level



common but more circuitous route to that place by North Street and Carrick Hill; and that travellers of every description generally took advantage of the strand way when occasion served. The Mill Gate is a mere railing on the map, and the North Gate is without any distinctive barrier.

There is a considerable number of buildings on this map on which there are no chimneys. Some of them, at least, may have been for public purposes. It would be desirable to know the use of the one in Waring Street from which a flag is flying. This street and High Street, which were the localities nearest to the river, were the business parts of the town, so far as shipping was concerned. The only public buildings to strike the eye, as in the ground plan of 1660, are still the Castle and the Church, with the Market House added, which were all in their most efficient state. The map is the highest topographical evidence that can be produced, and no written words can convey so clear an impression of Belfast in 1685 as this great contemporary record. Leaving maps, those mute witnesses of the past, aside for a little, let us turn to the evidences of the topographical condition of the town in the seventeenth century to be derived from written and printed words.

In 1670 the Earl of Donegall demised to William Waring the following properties:—

“The four half Burgage Shares or tenements called John Brookes’s, Colwells, Huddlestons, and Taylor’s Tenements, with the Tenement or Tan Pits, containing in front 228 feet, and extending back 126 feet on the north side of Broad Street in Belfast.

“The close belonging to the said Tan Pits lying in Stronmoore.

“A parcel of land in Stronmoore in the fields of Belfast.

“A parcel in Stranmoore, making in Stranmoore Thirteen acres English measure.

“Two Tenements or Half Burgage Shares in Broad Street and Skipper Lane, with three acres in the Fields of Belfast.”

The above is an abbreviation of a very long document. Waring made a payment to the Earl of £60; surrendered a certain lease granted to his father, Thomas Waring, of a close or plot of

ground containing two acres on the south side of Goose Lane "without the gate of Belfast;" contracts to pay besides, for all the burgage shares, the tan pits, the lands in Stronmore of great extent, now near the centre of Belfast, the yearly rent of £15 0s. 3d., "and seven couple of fat capons . . . seven days' work of a horse and man, or seven shillings in lieu thereof . . . £2 12s. 0d. as Heriot at the death of every chief Tenant; to grind at Belfast Mills; to build good Houses in front of the said Burgage Shares within Five Years, and to plant and preserve one hundred and fifty young oak, ash, elm, or beech trees."

The preceding quotation might give rise to much inquiry. Waring Street and Skipper Street were not entirely built up in front in 1670. How many houses did Mr. Waring erect on all these burgage shares? Was it intended from the language that he should plant the oaks in Waring Street, or in the close belonging to the tan-pits in Stronmore? Did he duly deliver the duty fowl, and send his man and horse for seven days to draw in my Lord's crops to the Castle? or did he pay one shilling per day in lieu thereof, that being the estimated daily cost of a man and horse in 1670? What might be the yearly value now of all these burgage shares, the thirteen acres of land in Stronmore, and the three acres in the fields? Doubtless a sum that would have appeared utterly incredible to William Waring.

The value of the shares is more distinctly ascertained by the terms of these two other grants. On 1st November, 1659, an indenture was made between the Earl of Donegall and George Macartney of Belfast, merchant, whereby the Earl, on receiving £38, demised for 99 years to Macartney one half burgage share, containing in front 42 feet, and extending backwards 126 feet in the High Street . . . and one half burgage share of land in the fields of Belfast, containing three acres and a quarter. The yearly rent was 14 shillings, and the payment for renewal at the fall of each life was £13 6s. 8d. The other lease was also to George Macartney, in 1678, of ground of precisely the same extent—42 feet in front and 126 feet in rear, and three acres in the fields; the lease was for 99 years, the fixed rent £1 12s. 0d. a-year,

and the fine £20 "in consideration of a new brick house the said Macartney has lately built." The town tenement in this case was in Broad Street. No renewal fine is mentioned at the fall of each life, but both leases include the small obligations of grinding at the mills of Belfast, the two or three days of the man and horse, and the fat capons to be yearly provided for his lordship's table.

Could any one identify or rescue from the obscurity of the past the localities named in the following extracts? Some of them at least were close to the Castle grounds, perhaps now the most valuable spot in all the town. In 1685, Sir Wm. Franklin and Countess of Donegall, his wife, were empowered to grant leases of certain parts of the Donegall estates, in virtue whereof—

"They demised to George Macartney for 61 years all that one tenement in Belfast between the Ash Grove near the Castle of Belfast and the Rampier of the Town, on the left side of the street leading from thence towards Maloane, extending backwards towards the Bowling Green. One Plot of Land on which several Tenements were built containing one acre situate between the said Rampier and the Mills, next adjoining to the said Highway to Maloane on the left. . . . Thirty-six feet of ground between Pouston's tenement and the New Gate House leaving 24 feet next the said Gate House as the same was then staked out, and extending backwards to the end of Pouston's garden, joining on the south with the meadow called the Cow Pasture."

The rent for all these considerable grants was £4 5s. 0d. a-year, a fine in hand of £40, and the usual small duties.

It will be understood from the preceding details that the burgage shares were well-known denominations; that they were always given in conjunction with parcels of land in the fields, the grazing or accommodation grounds or town-parks of the early settlers; and that others as well as John Vesey had been favoured with such, either by Sir Arthur Chichester or his immediate successors, as fresh inhabitants were attracted to the town. The information conveyed is of rather indefinite character, and does not explain the position of specific objects or localities, the exact state of which at particular times it would be so desirable to learn.



The few hints, by travellers or others in the seventeenth century, of the appearance or size of the town, or the entire silence of such regarding it, may be received as farther topographical illustrations, though of a negative kind. The little notice which it received in very early times is not much to be wondered at, but it is surprising to find, so lately as 1611, the disregard which is shown to it by Lord Carew in his *Journey into Ireland* in that year.<sup>1</sup> After describing his departure from London, he arrives on the 1st of August at Newry; on the next day he is at Drommorevagh (Dromore), on the next at Strandmylet, (Strandmillis), from which he passes to Knockfergus, where he remains two days. Belfast is not named or alluded to, which is rather unaccountable, as it was at least known, and the ownership of his friend Chichester might have inspired Lord Carew with some little interest. It is equally unnoticed by Sir Thomas Ryves, who, in 1624, enumerating the chief seaport towns on the north-east coast, makes no mention of Belfast among them.

A most interesting topographical notice, not so much specially of Belfast as its vicinity, occurs in the *Itinerary of Father MacCunna*, supposed by its learned editor to have been of the year 1643.<sup>2</sup> The monk in his travels comes to Belfast. He says—

“ ‘Loch Laodh’ (Belfast Lough) bounds either Clanaboy, [at] the head of which, when the tide is out, may be crossed a ford which is called *Beall-feerst*. Beside it formerly stood the Castle of the lords of these territories, in the navel, as it were, and central point, of the two regions. Previously to the present war that old Castle of the O’Neills was repaired by Lord Chichester, an Englishman, who made it his own residence. The Town, which is built there, is no mean one, accessible to the inhabitants of either district, as well as of Scotland. From the ford of which I have just spoken it takes the name of *Beall-feerst*, where the river empties itself, which is called the River of the Laggan or of the valley, yielding a plentiful supply of salmon, and dividing in its course the two regions of Clanaboy on the north and

<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers*, 1603-1624, p. 218.

<sup>2</sup> See the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. ii., p. 44. The *Itinerary*, edited by Dr. Reeves, has most valuable notes.

south. The lands on either side of the river are pleasant and fertile. In the town of Beall-ferst there is no recollection of any sacred place. But at a short distance from it is the parish church, rendered important by having five or six chapelries (as the expression is), which were under the control of the rector of the aforesaid parish church called *Sean-chill*."

There are a few errors in this, particularly that in which MacCanna describes Belfast as having no recollection of any sacred place. The old Chapel of the Ford was there, and, nominally, a Protestant vicar; though the war then going on, and the intrusion of heretical soldiers into the country, may have deprived the place of all sacredness to the apprehension of the pious monk. His notice of what he calls the parish church, or "Sean-chill," is curious. It was in ruins in 1643. The probability, however, is, that he did not visit the town in person, but derived his information regarding it from hearsay evidence. His expression, "no mean town," would convey the impression that some one had reported it to him as a good town; and that he should not have inquired and written farther is very much to be regretted.

The next still more meagre, unsatisfactory, and indirect notice of Belfast is from a soldier of the civil wars. This was the officer in Sir John Clotworthy's regiment whose name is unknown, but whose narrative, previously referred to, has all the internal evidence of truth and credibility.<sup>1</sup> The fortune of war brought him to our neighbourhood in 1649, and he writes—

"Then the Lords and those Officers before named advised together, whether to march that night by way of a Ford at Stranmillis at Ebbwater, and so to pass by Belfast and to Carrickfergus, or to march by the way of Magherlin. On which the Lordes answered, especially Ardes, that he scorned to march away in night-time from his enemy, and so encamped that night on those Hills east of a place called Kinmuck, then a House belonging to Lieutenant-Colonel Moses Hill. . . . And so next morning early all marched by Kinmuck."

The belligerents were thus hovering about close to Stranmillis,

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<sup>1</sup> *The Irish Warr of 1641*, p. 100.

and events were passing which led immediately after to the battle of Lisnastrain. This military writer is also, as well as Father MacCanna, most imperfect in his details, and had no idea of what modern times expect from a correspondent at the seat of war. The party encamped that night, to all appearance, on the Castlereagh Hills; Kinmuck (? Cromock) would seem to mean Moses Hill's house at Strandmillis; but no account by this really intelligent person is given of the town at the interesting period of 1649.

A French traveller called De Rocheford ventured into the wilds of Ireland in 1672, and found his way to Belfast, of which he thus writes—

“Afterwards I arrived at Belfast seated on a river at the bottom of a gulf where barks and vessels anchor on account of the security and goodness of the port, wherefore several merchants live here who trade to Scotland and England, whither they transport the superfluities of this country. Here is a very fine Castle, and two or three large streets as in a new built town.”

This Frenchman's visit must have been short, or his observation limited. The town, small as it was, deserved higher commendation. Story, the author of an *Impartial History of the Wars of Ireland*, knew it better, and describes it at the Revolution as—

“A very large Town, and the greatest for Trade in the north of Ireland. It stands at the head of the Bay of Carrickfergus, and the Inhabitants have lately built a very famous Stone Bridge, but the Wars coming on, it is not as yet quite finished.”<sup>1</sup>

It must, however, be said that the official report of the size of Belfast at the Revolution is contained in these few words—that it was “a small open town situate in the inmost part of the Bay.”<sup>2</sup> It did not attract any farther observation from the reporter.

Some additions could be made to notices of this character

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<sup>1</sup> Story's *Impartial History*, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup> *Relation of the Campaign*, p. 3. Published by authority. Dublin, 1689.

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but being scarcely topographical, the space will be more profitably occupied with such as are, even if outside the old town, though in many cases far within its modern bounds, and in others extending to well-known suburbs. As preliminary to this, Sir William Petty's map of the entire Barony of Belfast, being a portion of what is denominated the Down Survey, and made about 1657, is here represented, showing the town and the neighbourhood in all their nakedness. It is not made in the modern fashion of a map, but is a mere draft or sketch, though not the less curious on that account. The Castle and Church of Belfast, the former under the name of Lord Chichester's House, are distinct: these, with four or five additional buildings, comprise the town—proving that this map was made only for a purpose, and not to preserve any true town-like appearance. The Town river and the Blackstaff are laid down much as they originally were, the latter near the Castle, both exhibiting very distinctly their parallel direction and the land thrown up between them, which formed the site of the first settlement, as adverted to at the beginning of this chapter. No ford is marked anywhere. "Strand-meli house" is as large as the Castle of Belfast, and Drumbridge has a greater appearance than the town itself. The mountains intended for our Belfast hills are wrongly placed, and insufficient in outline; the Cave Hill especially, so distinctly marked in the older map of 1570, is nowhere to be seen.

Our immediate suburbs were nearly as bare as Sir William Petty's map represents. About the same year in which it was made the following lease was granted. The rent reserved in it will no doubt be ludicrous to the many who know Skeigoneil and the other places mentioned, but such, it may be conjectured, was the usual land value in 1659. The Earl of Donegall leased for ninety-nine years to Thomas Waring, at November, 1659, for a fine of £50 and £24 per annum, the town and townland of "Skeaghenearle,"<sup>1</sup> and one-quarter of Listollyard adjoining

<sup>1</sup> Skeaghenearle would seem an early corruption of Skeigoneil, as the place was and is now called. The Grove, another well-known locality just adjoining, was called in the last century Earl's Grove, both terms probably originating with the first Earl of Donegall.

thereto, with the usual additions of fat hens, duty days, and compulsory grinding at the mills of Belfast—

“The said lands are bounded on the east by the sea; on the south by the Milewater to the new Inclosure and Park by a ditch and quicksett; on the west by the ditch of Ballyoghaghan, and so under by two other quarters of Listollyard.”

It is far from being a clear description.<sup>1</sup> The country, so near Belfast, was unenclosed and bare of houses. Mr. Waring was bound to quicksett all his part of the outbounds. He had to contract to build a “good handsome English-like house,” and plant large quantities of trees; another part of the lease expresses that his duty-days were to be in harvest, “with one able Horse or Garron, well furnished with drivers or loaders, to draw in hay for his Lordship,” to whom he was also to present yearly “a good fat mutton, or three and four pence in lieu thereof,” the probable value in 1659 of the animal so described.

The favourite suburb of Belfast, as it is perhaps still, appears to have been the Malone district; at least the notices regarding its topography are more abundant than those of any other side of the town. It was also more improved in the seventeenth century than any other neighbourhood. Dobbs, in 1683, writing of it, says—

“From Lambegg the way leads direct to Belfast, which is all along for the most part furnished with houses, little orchards, and gardens; and on the right hand the Countess of Donegall hath a very fine Park well stored with Venison, and in it a Horse Course of Two miles, and may be called an English Road.”

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<sup>1</sup> This description of Skeigoneil in 1659 proves that its frontage extended from the Milewater. The present limits still begin at the Milewater River, now in the town, and comprise several of the demesnes from that point. The extent of Skeigoneil by the Ordnance Survey is now 620 acres; but in a very interesting map from actual survey, in the Donegall office, of the year 1767, only 315 acres are said to be comprised in the townland. This map shows exactly twelve houses as standing in Skeigoneil in 1767—several of them, from being detached, evidently office-houses—so that not more than half-a-dozen families may have dwelt where now there are so many. Not only houses, but roads and trees are also almost absent. Other townlands on the Malone side of the town show equal transformations since 1767.

The park here alluded to was Strandmillis and Cromack, and it is not easy to realise the difference between this locality now and the time when it was so described, but that time is nearly two centuries ago. Some of the places are now literally within the town; much of it favourite suburbs almost too crowded, and approaching every year to the condition of streets. The very farthest extremity of the Countess of Donegall's Park, in which the deer were wandering, was in the outskirts of the present town. Moses Hill had begun these improvements under the very favourable lease given to him by Sir Arthur Chichester. When this lease expired, the property passed again into the possession of the Donegall family, who dealt with it as with other parts of their estates, which brings to light a much more explicit description of the park and its localities in the olden days than a passing traveller like Mr. Dobbs could possibly supply. In a list of the principal leaseholders, and the lands which they held under the Earl of Donegall in 1692, these places are thus referred to:—

“All these lands, tenements, and hereditaments called the Demesnes of Strandmellis, Cromock, and Friar's Bush, containing by estimation 300 acres . . . whereof 100 Acres were then enclosed in a Deer Park, and called Strandmellis Park . . . and the remainder enclosed and to be empaled, and called Cromock Park.”

These lands, or parts of them, had passed through several hands, till, in 1696, John Johnston became the possessor. His lease mentions the names of former owners, or other particulars worth noticing, either as new or corroborative.

“All that parcel of land commonly called the Old Forge . . . and also one other parcel of land called Hilsborough and the New Forge, with all Houses, Gardens, Orchards, &c., situate in or near Mylone, formerly in the possession of Robert Barr<sup>1</sup> and Captain George Hart, and late in the possession of Thomas Walcot.”

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<sup>1</sup> This Robert Barr was rather a noted person in those days. He was connected with Captain Lawson in what might be called the Old Iron Works of Belfast; and, besides that, obtained notoriety on another account. In a letter from Bishop Lesley to the Lord-Deputy Strafford, 18th October, 1638 (Strafford's

The rent for all this large extent of fine land was £56 15s. 0d. a-year; the fine, £345.

The topography of the seventeenth century special to the Castle, its grounds and gardens, is best learned from the map of 1685. The considerable space within the rampart which they occupied, the extensive garden plots all laid out with regularity and precision, the connection of the sea water with the gardens, and the additions made to the town rampart for convenience, or to add to the beauty of the spacious enclosure, are all clearly depicted. The great roll of 1666, to some extent already drawn upon in the history of that year, abounds with allusions to the gardens, to the bowling-green, the cherry garden, the apple garden, and to arbours and walks in certain named quarters, which were the cool shades, the favourite and retired retreats, of the Castle inmates and the guests of rank who were frequent visitors to the noble residence of the Earl of Donegall. Payment of wages for rolling, cleaning, paring, weeding, wheeling in ashes and "sinders" to improve the walks, are made the subjects of many entries; and while strawberries, currants, and gooseberries are mentioned, no notice is taken of flowers, except this—"Paid for making Boarders (Borders) at the Rampier, and for women gathering Violats in ye Fields to sett in the Gardens." The

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*Letters*, vol. i., p. 227), are these words :—"And in the meantime I daresay that these persons whom I present to your Lordship are guilty, because they are notable nonconformists and have been lately in Scotland; Robert Barr of Malone, Robert Nevin of Belfast, George Martin of the same; and David Kennedy and Robert Ross who have fled this kingdom for fear of the High Commission, *but have left their land behind them.*" There is more about Barr in a correspondence between two such exalted characters as Strafford and the King, in which the former likens him to the Scotch rebels—"Froward children they are; constrained they may, persuaded I doubt they cannot be." Mr. Barr seems finally to have submitted, as Strafford in another letter says—"He has acknowledged his fault, asked pardon, and is at liberty again. I wish he may make the good use thereof he ought."

Robert Barr's will is entirely uninteresting. That of Robert Nevin is almost equally so. He was a Belfast merchant, escaped all the dangers both of Lord Strafford and the civil wars, and died in Belfast in 1661; at least that is the date of his will. He left considerable property, and calls George Macartney his "cushn."

walks therefore extended to the water side; and the simple "violats" may have been "sett" in some secluded spot where now perhaps a colossal linen warehouse rears its lofty pinnacles. Another entry is farther proof of the garden walks extending to the water—"Paid for drawing thorns from the Gardlines to make a waye to the edge of the sea." The sluice shown on the map of 1685 is perhaps that referred to in this entry—"Paid Richard Humfreys for making a Dam in the Rampier where a Sluice must be set to keep the fresh water."

But besides the incessant labour and expenditure within the Castle enclosure and gardens by the Earl of Donegall of the seventeenth century, he seems to have taken up—perhaps as a sort of natural duty, when Police Boards were unknown—the cleansing and keeping in repair the streets of the town itself, or that portion of them which was thought worthy of such attention. According to the expenditure roll, my lord's steward not only "paid Thomas Joy for paving about the Castle," but he also "Paid Labourers for cleaning ye streets," a short and explicit entry. In another place there is—"Paid Henry Charley for Six Days for Cleaning the Streets." In another—"Paid for Stones and for putting them on the Street leading to ye Mill," probably the first attempt to give a solid footing to Castle Street or Mill Street. All the entries prove much care and attention on the part of the owner, a result of residence which appears to have been much the rule of the family till after the burning of the Castle in 1708.

The descriptions of the maps of old Belfast, and the topographical observations to which they have led, might have been here supplemented by the derivations of the names of the townlands and places in the Chichester Patents. The ancient names can still be distinguished with tolerable distinctness near the mountains or in distant parts of the estate, but adjoining the town they are in many cases almost forgotten in more modern designations, or absorbed in the streets of Belfast. It would not be convenient to notice them here, and the names, with their



derivations, are therefore all collected together in a suitable place.<sup>1</sup>

Of the four maps<sup>2</sup> which tend to make this chapter valuable the largest is that of 1685, the original being 3 feet 3 inches in breadth, and 1 foot 9 inches in height. The remaining three are about the same size as the copies from which they have been made.

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<sup>1</sup> For the recital of the first Chichester Patent, and the derivations of the town-land and some other names, see Appendix No. 13.

<sup>2</sup> The map of 1685 was included among the *Pinkerton MSS.* All the others, and the engraved illustrations within the work everywhere, were obtained from other places by the author.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## EARLY POPULATION OF BELFAST.

THE population of a place is reached inferentially when the number of householders is ascertained. Acting on the principle involved in this mode of computation, it so happens that a basis for it is available in the taxation—or cessing, as it was styled—levied on the inhabitants of Belfast in 1642, and several subsequent years, for the support of the troops in the town. The *Corporate Records* supply ample details of these returns. Supplies were constantly required, and the names of those obliged to provide them are stated at full length. The number of ratepayers for this object varied from 120 to about 200. If 150 be taken as the average, at six persons to a house, the fixed population in the times referred to would have been under 1000 individuals. It is a most indefinite kind of calculation. The population in those warlike days, independently of this limited number, was increased by strangers naturally gathering to a place where excitement of some sort, hopes of gain, or personal safety, might have been supposed to be found.

But the earliest special Census of Belfast, when wars had nearly passed away, has been derived from the labours of Sir William Petty. The subject of the Irish population in his time engaged the attention of that great political economist and financier, and the conclusions at which he arrived are in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*.<sup>1</sup> Under the title

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<sup>1</sup> The words preceding this enumeration from the Academy official are, "We have also placed in our Library a complete copy of the early Census Returns ascribed to A.D. 1659. This transcript has been carefully prepared and collated under the personal inspection of Mr. W. H. Hardinge, to whom the public are indebted for the discovery of the original documents among the papers of Lord Lansdowne."—*Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, vol. ix., p. 381.

“Barony of Belfast,” the following tabular statement of the population of the town appears, as it was, according to Petty, in the year 1659 :—

Places.	Number of People.	Tituladoes' Names.	English.	Irish.
Towne and quart <sup>rs</sup> of Belfast.		<div> <div>[</div> <div> The Rt. Hon. the Marquiss of Antrim.  Peter Polewheele, Gent.  John Appellwhite, Gent.  Alexander M'Donell, Gent.  The Rt. Hon. the Earle of Donnegail.  Matthew Harrison, gent. </div> <div>]</div> </div>		
Belfast towne	589	<div> <div>[</div> <div> James South, Gent.  Samuel Bluett, gent.  Gilbert Wye, gent.  John Begg, gent.  Richard Cannon, gent.  Capt<sup>n</sup> Francis Meeke, Esq<sup>r</sup>.  John Leathes, gent.  George Martin, Gent.  Thomas Warring, gent.  Hugh Doake, Gent.  John Ridgby, Gent.  George M'Cartney, Gent.  William Warreing, Gent.  William Stuckley, Gent.  John Clugston, Gent. </div> <div>]</div> </div>	366	223

This, the first formal Census of Belfast, is a very singular document. It is impossible to believe that this town, when a Corporation of nearly fifty years' growth; with Sovereign, Burgesses, and all the state of office, occupying through the civil wars rather an important place; with ships at sea, and merchants of account, and progress to some extent advanced, should have contained in 1659 only 600 inhabitants. It would require the

Tituladoes to be taken as a separate group, but which the table scarcely makes clear, even to make up 600 as the gross population. The document, however, comes in an official shape, and must be received as the best that can be obtained. The very short time which Sir William Petty occupied in making his great Survey, the extent to which he had to rely on the assistance of others, perhaps neither very careful nor competent, the probable omission of the younger branches of families, and the restriction to the men only, will all naturally occur as possible causes of error.

The Marquis of Antrim, of historic fame, is represented in this return as an inhabitant of Belfast. Those best acquainted with the events of his life say he never was so; and yet it is singular to find him twice mentioned in a connection indicating either permanent or temporary residence—one, in 1659, his inclusion among the Tituladoes of the town; and the other his presence at the funeral of William Leathes, in the succeeding year. The Tituladoes will be understood as a complimentary title, though certainly an unusual one, bestowed on the persons of best position.<sup>1</sup> About ten names are those of recognised inhabitants of Belfast, and many of them occur in other relations in connection with the town. In order to make this early Census more complete, it is desirable to add, also from Sir William Petty's returns, the population occupying adjacent places, on which much

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<sup>1</sup> Some of those in the beginning of the list were most probably military officers who had only a temporary connection with the town—at least they are not found again as inhabitants. A Robert Stutley, possibly a connection of William, the Titulado of 1659, makes his will in Belfast in 1672, but it has no reference to his history or origin. He leaves his pewter dishes, silver spoons, and small houses in "Michael Harrison his Lane" to different persons not of his own name, and has endorsed on the will the unusual proviso, "not to be opened till four days after my funeral." The name of Harrison also was not lost, as it is found subsequently. Michael Harrison makes his will in 1683—though Matthew is the name in the list—bequeathing all his property, which was very considerable, to his son Edward, the Captain Edward Harrison who was Sovereign of Belfast in 1695. The first Harrison is also mentioned in a military capacity.

Bluett was a connection of the Donegall family, Mary, the third sister of Sir Arthur Chichester, having been married to Sir Richard Bluett. This Titulado, now resident in Belfast, was probably the son of Sir Richard.

of the modern town and its crowded suburbs are now built. It is as follows:—

Places.	Number of People.	Tituladoes' Names	English.	Irish.
Belonging to Belfast.				
The Towne lands of Edendery, Ballysilly, and Lagainele, ... ..	066	...	043	023
The Towne lands of Balloghan, the Old parke, and part of Listillyard,	024	...	013	011
The towne lands of Cloahcastle, New Parke, and Skiggan Earle, ...	038	...	020	018
	128		076	052

If this population return be correct, on none of our beautiful suburbs in the direction of the County Antrim shore, the Cave Hill, or the green mountains, had a single Titulado as yet made an inroad. Gathered together then, and for generations after, in the town were all the notabilities. Even the charms of "Mylone, Dunmurry, and the Fall" (erroneously written "the Hall" by the copyist) had as yet attracted but four Tituladoes—they were George Ogilvie, Thomas Walcot, Francis Davis, and William Lasley—and a gross population in this large district of only 388 persons. The nine townlands on the other side of the town were, as will be seen by the table, even more thinly peopled, having but 128 inhabitants. These returns can never now be either corroborated or contradicted, but they are most probably much short of the actual population,<sup>1</sup> the heads of families only having been reckoned.

<sup>1</sup> To prove the superior size and importance of Carrickfergus over Belfast, in 1659 the population of that town is returned at 1311. The entire County Antrim contained at this time, according to Petty, only 14,728, and the whole Barony of Belfast 3852 persons.

The next estimate of the population of Belfast may be again approximately obtained by a method already alluded to, and which was the ready mode adopted for the purpose before a more perfect system came into operation. This was accomplished through the medium of the Hearth-money Tax, one of the oldest of English imposts, and which was first introduced into Ireland in the reign of Charles the Second. Belfast came under its operation as early as any other place; but, selecting the year 1666 as that from which to draw conclusions, it is found that the town then contained 204 houses or tenements subject to this Tax. The Roll which conveys this information is probably the most interesting document that has ever been published in connection with Belfast, containing not alone the particulars of the taxation, but the actual names of all the inhabitants liable to the impost, which must have been the entire householders of any consideration.<sup>1</sup> The Roll, which is in the Record Office, Dublin, is so much chafed on the edge that it is impossible to discern whether or not its contents refer to places beyond the precise town limits. The probability is that it comprises some known boundary or constableness, the words Malone and Dunmurry, as well as that of Belfast, being faintly visible on the margin. The mass of the names, however, are those of Belfast people, and admitting that if it did extend somewhat into the country in which a few scattered inhabitants dwelt, there was probably in the town itself an equivalent number who from poverty were exempt from the Hearth-money Tax, and who were consequently not included in the enumeration. The names on the Roll, calculating five individuals to a house, would make, in 1666, the population of Belfast 1020; five and a-half would increase the number to 1122; the former estimate, guided by Sir William Petty's return, made only seven years before, being that most likely to be adopted by casual inquirers. The Earl of Donegall lived at this time in great magnificence, if we may judge from the Roll, which makes in his Castle of Belfast

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<sup>1</sup> This valuable Roll being too long for insertion here will be found in Appendix No. 14.



"fforty Hearthes,"<sup>1</sup> the proof of a retinue which must have swelled in an exceptional manner the general population. Only two inhabitants were rich enough to have four hearths; nine had three, eighteen had two, and all the other householders in the town, 174 in number, but one hearth each for every purpose.

Though the population of the town on many occasions is of necessity mentioned, it is useful to bring to a point in one place a view of its progressive increase at different periods, from the tiny beginnings which the preceding pages present. No satisfactory inference of the number of people can be drawn from the large map of Belfast of 1685; but from its general appearance, and the aggregate of all the tenements, amounting probably to 400, it may be considered that the entire population could not have been under 2000, and that it was a little more at the end of the century. It is but conjecture, and the estimate from the supposed number of tenements could not well be other than fallacious, as it is not likely the drawer of the map did more than represent general appearances without reference to the precise number of houses. The population subsequently to these returns, as taken by authority, and with care and method, is here shortly expressed up to the last general Census, and affords evidence at one view of the rise of Belfast in this most essential attribute of eminence.

A.D. 1757.....	8,549	A.D. 1831.....	53,287
„ 1782.....	13,105	„ 1841.....	75,308
„ 1791.....	18,320	„ 1851.....	100,300
„ 1813.....	27,832	„ 1861.....	121,602
„ 1821.....	37,277	„ 1871.....	174,394

These returns all include the County Down portion of the town.

The population in this year (1876) is generally spoken of as 200,000 in round numbers; and, if not quite reaching that amount, there is little doubt that it will exceed it at the next decennial enumeration in 1881.

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<sup>1</sup> Sir William Petty, in his *Political Anatomy*, represents the house of the Earl of Meath in Dublin having 27 chimneys as proof of size and grandeur. This does not prove the number of hearths beneath them, but it is quite possible there were not 40, and that the Castle of Belfast was the most magnificent dwelling in Ireland, at least in the matter of hearths.

## CHAPTER XV.

## EARLY TRADE OF BELFAST.

NO information can be collected of the extent or condition of the very early trade of Belfast. At the beginning of the seventeenth century, what little could be gathered from this source in so petty a place was probably farmed for some most inconsiderable sum. Thus in 1606 the Customs of Belfast, as well as some other places, were granted to John Wakeman; in 1608 to Arthur Bassett, brother-in-law to Sir Arthur Chichester; and in 1612 to Sir James Hamilton. What the amount was at any of the above periods the Patent Rolls, which give us the bare statement, afford no evidence. It could have been but little, as on the 17th August, 1611, there is an official Report, entitled "A Brief Collection of the Customs in the several parts of Ireland hereafter mentioned," in which Belfast is not so much as named, but "Carigfergus" presents for six years the following amounts for its Customs:—

"Carigfergus—43rd Elizabeth, £97 13s. 2d.; 44th, £18 16s. 3d.; 1st James, £76 0s. 3d.; 2nd, £95 0s. 12d.; 3rd, £66 3s. 1½d.; 4th, £45 12s. 9¾d. Total, £399 6s. 7¼d. Seventh part, £66 11s. 1¼d.

*Mem.* The town doth challenge by charter one third part of the Customs, nevertheless we have fully charged the same. Also there is nothing deducted for fees of officers of the Customs, certified to be £26 13s. 4d."<sup>1</sup>

Several years after the date of the preceding report, while Carrickfergus maintained a large establishment, the early trade of Belfast was sufficiently served by one "waiter," the title then bestowed on an official of the Customs. Even in 1657, when the

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of State Papers* (1603–1624), lxi., p. 85. The calculation here of the seventh part seems to be rather erroneous.

Carriekfergus privilege had ceased, there were in that place "a Collector, Clerk of Cheque, Surveyor, and Two Wayters." Of Belfast the report is—"Simon Spicer, wayter, dead, and William Stuckley in his stead."<sup>1</sup> It has been often affirmed, and probably with truth, that the first impulse given to trade in Belfast was the withdrawal from Carriekfergus of the privilege above alluded to, and which it had long enjoyed, of retaining for its own advantage on all its imports and exports, and on those of a large extent of the adjoining coasts both in Down and Antrim, one third part of the duties leviabie therein. Belfast was exempt from this Carriekfergus claim or chartered right; but it gave that ancient corporation an advantage in the way of trade over every other part of the country. Strafford, the Lord Deputy, brought it to an end in 1637, and this town must have experienced the benefit of the change. The existence of this famous favour attached to Carriekfergus, the general trade relations and practices of the age in and around our near neighbourhood, are curiously exemplified in "A Report on the State of the Customs addressed by Charles Moncke, Surveyor General, to Sir George Ratcliffe in 1637," and from which a few appropriate extracts are here culled. Sir George Ratcliffe was the intimate friend, and said to have been the relative, of Strafford. He says—

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<sup>1</sup> Civil Establishment order of 7th July, 1657. The ancient records of Carriekfergus are lost, or have in some manner disappeared. A copy, or a large portion of them, was fortunately taken by Dean Dobbs, or at his instance, in 1785. The book in which they are transcribed is now the property of Marriot Robert Dalway, Esq., M.P. for Carriekfergus, by whom it was with great liberality entrusted to me for many weeks for examination. The word *Belfast* only occurs twice in the entire book; the first time where the capture of Sir Brian O'Neill is noticed, and the second the mention of King William's departure to Belfast. Strafford's purchase for £3000 of the trading privilege of Carriekfergus is distinctly described, and with equal distinctness it is declared twenty-two years after—that is, in 1659—at a meeting of the Corporation, that the above sum, or any interest thereon, was never received for the benefit of the town, as expressed in the agreement, but insinuating that "particular persons had dealt with it without accounting to the town." The powers annexed to this grant extended to several small ports in Down and Antrim, all to the benefit of the great port of Carriekfergus. The extent of the privilege is stated in M'Skimin's history of that town, p. 182, and its extinction must have been universally beneficial.

“There is a place called Conn’s Water within Two Miles of Belfast, and another place called Garmoyle part of the Port of Bangor, in both which places the officers of Carrickfergus receive a benefit of the third part of the Customs for wines or other goods discharged there, whereas if they entered the Port of Bangor the King receives the whole; the farthest of these Creeks is not above Three Miles from Hollywood where the waiter is resident, and can come at low water to the ships’ sides. I gave charge to the waiter at Hollywood to take charge of them that no goods should be shipped or discharged there but he should be present with the officers of Carrickfergus, it being unfit that wines or goods of value should be discharged there without them both.”

This was prior, and but a little, to the extinction of the Carrickfergus privilege.

“John Boulter was waiter at Hollywood being a creek of Bangor ; per ann. £20.”

“There was no beam, scales, weights or Storehouse at Hollywood, so the goods seized being put in weak places have been stolen away ; I gave orders for supplying these defects.”

“In Bangor is a fair Custom House built but not finished by the Lord of Claneboy ; . . . if it were finished it were the best Custom House in Ireland.”

“The Store House and Custom House at Carrickfergus are very fair, well situated, and strong, being an old Castle repaired, wherein are many convenient rooms for lodging chambers, studies for officers, and all things necessary.”

“John Hornby, waiter at Carrickfergus, gave a let pass for two tuns of French wine to be discharged at Garmoyle out of a ship of Belfast the 1st of June 1637, which was more than a waiter ought to do although it had paid custom, it being their duties to execute warrants, and make none.”

“The Boatmen at Carrickfergus deserve their Salary, if they be honest, trusty, and always have their Boat afloat and ready, but I suspect them, being Scotchmen, to be hardly indifferent against their countrymen who altogether trade in that place.”

“The merchants and pedlars discharge at Glenarm where there is no waiter, and fill the country full of commodities whereof none appear in the Books. The pedlars out of Scotland take advantage of such unguarded creeks and swarm about the country in great numbers and sell all manner of wares which they may afford at easier rates than

poor shopkeepers that live in corporations, bear offices, pay cess and all charges and their due customs, and are beggared by these Runnagadoes who have no residence or place of abode in the kingdom, but bring over wares, steal the customs, and convey the money over in specie and that to no small value, which journeys deserve a careful and speedy prevention."

"John Sande, waiter at Belfast, £20 per ann."<sup>1</sup>

It is plain from these extracts that Belfast in 1637 occupied as a place of trade a very inferior position; that it was every way subordinate to Carrickfergus; that it had no Custom House like Bangor; and that it was not looked on, so far as this Report discloses, as materially different in a trading light from Holywood, now almost absorbed within it, or forming one of its out suburbs.

They show with considerable distinctness the practical working of the Carrickfergus privilege. Sir George Ratcliffe says that town lost £300 a-year by the change; but it must have appeared to Strafford an equitable and necessary revocation. His general endeavour to improve the trade of all Ireland is summed up by Ratcliffe in these words, which contain much truth—

"By his means and other encouragement of merchants, trading did increase to full treble of what it was formerly, and for every Tun of shipping which he found in Ireland he left an hundred Tuns. . . . In the mean time he caused the merchants to pay their Customs more

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<sup>1</sup> This Report, presented to Sir George Ratcliffe, is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, the reference being "Harleian No. 2138."

Whether the following scrap forms part of the Surveyor General's Report in 1637 to Ratcliffe does not appear, but it is in the same connection, accompanied with curious, and there is little doubt original observations about buildings and trade matters in Bangor, Killileagh, and other places, and which are of necessity passed over :—

"The Clanneboy is a large country altogether inhabited by Scots: the customs there, viz. in Donaghadee and Bangor, being raised for the most part by cattle, that are brought from other parts by reason of the aptness of the transportation, the country itself consisting wholly of oats which they have with a little labour. I find very little difference or change in the country, either in building or in enclosing by the inhabitants in town or country. They do nothing for ornament or beautifying the country." The district is at this day a great grain country, when cultivation has so much diminished elsewhere.



duly than they had done, whereof many in Corporations were more sensible and displeased at it than the great security and Benefit which they received in their Trading did recompense in their apprehension.”<sup>1</sup>

While the trading element around was in this state—improving and becoming more settled—the Great Rebellion broke out, in the first years of which there could not have been much system in the collection of the Revenue, though the events in progress may have excited the activity of the Scotch “Runnagadoes,” and other irregular merchants, and been productive of some of that enterprise generally accompanying times of commotion. The Commissioners who came to this town in 1646, accredited by the English Parliament, found, on account of General Monro’s obstructiveness, that they could not act in all things with supreme authority, notwithstanding which they took upon themselves the chief management at least of the public revenue, and issued from Carrickfergus and Belfast numerous orders similar to the following:—

“By the Commissioners of Ulster—Order for Mr. Norris to receive the Customs of several Ports to defray public charges.

“These are to authorise you to receive the Customs of the several ports of Carrickfergus, Belfast (not as yet disposed of by us), Bangor, Donaghadee, and Strangford, together with what they are in arrears at Michaelmas last; to empower your occasions about the public stores; and to continue the receiving of the same until you shall have further order to the contrary, keeping a just account thereof in writing that you may be answerable for the same to those the Parliament shall intrust. And the officers of the Customs of the said ports are hereby required to pay the same unto you every quarter as they were accustomed, of which they may not fail at their perils. And for so doing this shall be your warrant. Given at Belfast 23rd October 1646.

“ARTHUR ANNESLEY.

WILLIAM BEALE.

“To Tobias Norris, Gent.”

The observation in this order about “Belfast not being yet disposed of” might imply that Monro had put in a counter claim for the taxation and duties derived from it, or in some way that

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<sup>1</sup> *Strafford's Letters*, vol. ii., p. 434.



it was yet in abeyance. There are repeated orders expressive of the state of trade in Belfast and many other places, and of the unavoidable relaxations in the Customs duties which the war rendered necessary.

“On 17th September 1646 the Commissioners license John Stewart and Archibald Moore, merchants of Belfast, to export from Liverpool free of Duty several Trunks of Haberdashery ware, with silks, buttons, and trimmings, for suits of clothes; two fardels containing hardwares, skins, and pasteboard, 8 bags of hops, one box of drugs, one runlet of oil, 1 Cwt. of Cotton for candlewicks, 12 Hats, and four dozen pound of whalebone; two fardels of wool cards, 16 ells of holland and six pieces of buckram for the use of the army and the poor inhabitants in that wasted country.”

“John Clugston merchant had License to export to Belfast 12 Bags of Hops, Two Packs of broad cloth, Two Packs of Stuff, Two Packs of Small Ware, 10 Dozen of Hats, and a bundle of bridle reins to the value of £300.”

“Gilbert Eccles had License to export<sup>1</sup> from London Four Packs of Clothes and Stuffs, containing also buttons, silk, buckram, bays, taffeta, holland, stockings, laces, paper, pasteboard, gloves, four barrells raisins, and glasses, Ten Bags of Hops, six boxes of tobacco pipes, a small cask of cards for wool, Two chests with glasses, two hampers of hats and some Crooked lane ware, six dozen of scythes, two packs of sickles, two barrells of rice, all of the value of £300 or thereabouts.”<sup>2</sup>

When these Commissioners ceased to be, they were succeeded by another body on a firmer basis, and with powers more ample, to whom was committed the charge of the great Precinct of Belfast. They were generally styled Commissioners of the Revenue, and the consolidation and advancement of trade formed no unimportant part of their administration. The *Cromwellian Papers* afford sufficient evidence of this, abounding with documents and orders on the subject, which apparently

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<sup>1</sup> Export is the word used in these licenses, and the abatement of the duties may have proceeded from the English authorities.

<sup>2</sup> These orders are extracted from many of similar character in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

exhibit a zeal for the furtherance of trade in Belfast. Two local examples may be given—

“Dublin 13th July 1653. Ordered that a Packet Boat for the conveying of intelligence betwixt the Province of Ulster and the Town of Ayr in Scotland be settled, and that Col. Robert Venables and the rest of the Commissioners of Revenue at Belfast do order the same as may be most for the advantage of the public.”

This is not the first time the usefulness of a Packet Boat was adverted to.

“5th August 1653. It was ordered that it be referred to Colonel Robert Venables and Colonel Robert Brown, jointly and severally, to consider how trade in the small ports between Ulster and Scotland may be opened without prejudice to the public, and likewise of fit persons to be by them appointed who are hereby authorised to give Licenses unto such persons as they shall conceive to be of honesty and integrity to trade with their ships and goods between any port of Ulster and Scotland, and to pass and repass without molestation. Such persons so trading to give good security to land their goods and merchandise in some of the Parliament’s garrisons, and not elsewhere, and to return Certificates from the Governors of the Garrisons where the goods are landed.”

It has not been possible to obtain any distinct or separate account of the trade of this town under the Commonwealth and Protectorate, or the money accruing to the Government from it; but, as in 1657 the entire public Revenue of Ireland was only £68,779,<sup>1</sup> the portion derived annually from Belfast to the Cromwellian Exchequer must indeed have been but small.

The old Customs Books preserved in the Record Office are

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<sup>1</sup> “The Revenue of Ireland for the Two Years ending 1st

November 1657	...	...	...	...	...	£137,588 13 3
For one year	...	...	...	...	...	£68,779 6 7½
Expense for said Two years	...	...	...	...	...	£142,509 11 8
For one year	...	...	...	...	...	£71,254 15 6

The expense more than the Revenue in the Two years £4,959 17 9”

From *State Papers* left by Secretary Thurloe, being an “Estimate of the Revenue and Expense of Ireland” as quoted in Clarendon’s *Revenue and Finances of Ireland*, p. 5.

very difficult to deal with, having frequently irregular headings, and not always specifying the residence of the merchant by whom goods were exported. The trade of this town was, however, considerable for the time. Customs duties were levied on all kinds of commodities—"cattle, butter, cheese, sallmon, hides, meal, coals, and salt;" even goods sent from Belfast to Dublin appear to have been taxed. Two examples of the kind of articles exported from Belfast are annexed, both of the year 1658:—

"— Brice exported to Glasgow 30 Barrels of oatmeal; customs on same, 15s."

"George M'Cartney and Thomas Warren, 20th October, Loaded for Dunkirk—

50 Barrels of Beef.....	£150	0	0
18 Do. Sallmon.....	27	0	0
33 Half Barrels of Butter.....	49	10	0
40 Firkins Butter, each containing 56 lbs.....	30	0	0
2 Bls. Candles cont <sup>s</sup> 20 Dozen.....	5	0	0
2 Dickers Rawe or salt Hydes.....	20	0	0
1 Dicker Rawe Kippes.....	5	0	0
<hr/>			
	£286	10	0

"Customs thereon, £14 6s. 6d."

The price of the butter in 1658 can most easily of all these goods be reached, and the 40 firkins of which the weight is expressed show the value to have been a fraction beyond three-pence per pound. A shilling per pound sterling on the estimated value seems to have been imposed indiscriminately on all the produce of the country, except oaten meal. It was apparently the same on imported commodities, a very large cargo arriving to one "John Mathews Marchant," valued at £502 15s. 0d., the half of which was tobacco; the duty payable on the entire was £25 2s. 9d. The increasing trade of Belfast under Cromwellian rule required two waiters, as appears from a paper in the Dublin Record Office, and who now formed the Customs establishment of the town. They were Simon Speir and Thomas Hodgkinson, and they received £18 a year each.

The rising commercial spirit of the time, and the mode of the management of the Revenue, are shown in the following petition :—

“Upon consideration of the Petition of the merchants and inhabitants of Belfast praying relief against the irregular and undue practice of the officers there employed by the Farmers of the Customs—Ordered that the said Farmers now in Dublin have a sight of the Petition, and they are to take the matter complained of into consideration and to take care that the petitioners have every redress therein as shall appear to be just and meet. And the said Farmers are likewise to have regard that for the future the petitioners receive no needless disturbance or any just cause of complaint. Dated 25 June, 1658.

“THOMAS HERBERT, Clerk of the Council.”<sup>1</sup>

The mode of collecting the Revenue in the time of the Protectorate was not without dissension.

This will be the proper place to introduce two lists of the mercantile marine of Belfast—the means of its carrying trade in those days, and the evidence of its early commerce. The first of these is the oldest shipping list of Belfast that has ever been published. No date is attached, but from internal proofs it belongs most probably to some period between 1659 and 1663. The importance of the early trade of Belfast, and the value of any facts connected with it, will be the excuse for the dry details. The two are to be preserved for reference only, and are every way solid and valuable information.<sup>2</sup> The names of the merchants in these lists belong to the reign of Charles the Second, which is the presumptive proof of the accuracy of the date assigned to them, and that the first one was early in that reign. The era was that of the active life of those who carried on the trade of the town for the remainder of the century. The first list annexed shows that 29 vessels then belonged to the port; the second, 27 vessels, though with a carrying power of 425 tons greater.

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Deputy and Council, Reference upon Petitions, A 15.

<sup>2</sup> The lists of ships following are both in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

Shipping List of Belfast about 1663, and Names of the Owners.

Ships.	Owners.	Tons	Guns.	Men.	Description.	Where Built.
Inskipin	Hugh Eccles, Edw'd Pottinger, Thos Pottinger, & Thos Young	150	14	35	Ship	Portugal.
Antelope	Geo. McCartney, Hu. Eccles, Thos Knox, Jas Chalmers, Thomas Pottinger, J. White, & Thos Martin	200	4	20	Ship	Christian.
Adventure	William Smyth, Jno White, Willm Arthur, & John Gregg	120	"	24	Ship	Coleraine.
William	Thomas Knox, William Lockhart	59	"	9	Ship	Liverpool.
Charlemont	Robt Whiteside, Thos Chads	40	"	8	Ship	Charlemont.
Olive Branch	George McCartney, Anthony Wild, Edward Wilson	40	"	9	Ship	Coleraine.
Providence	Thos Aitkin, Willm Lockhart, John Adam, Anthony Wild, Alexr Shukler, & William Ruiney	40	"	8	Ship	Belfast.
Grizell	James Young	30	"	7	Ship	Belfast.
Dolphin	Lewis Thompson	25	"	7	Bark	Lough Neagh.
Ossory	Chas Jones, John Fletcher	20	"	7	Ketch	Yarmouth.
James	James Glasgow	25	"	7	Bark	Belfast.
Margaret	Thomas Owen, Lewis Thompson	50	"	10	Ship	Coleraine.
Providence	John Walsh	18	"	5	Bark	Lough Neagh.
Hope	Willm Dobbin, George Lockhart, Robt Adare, Robert Lennox	18	"	5	Bark	Boston.
Expedition	Marm. Newton, Ezkl. Davis, R. Huggan	49	"	9	Frigate	Barnstaple.
May Flower	Edw'd M'Brayde, Mat. Johnson	24	"	6	Bark	Whitehouse, near Belfast.
Helena	J. Mitchell, Hugh M'Callum	40	"	10	Ship	Glenarm.
Fullwood	Thomas & Edw'd Pottinger, Jno Black, Jno Martin, Nat. Trimble	50	"	10	Ketch	Belfast.
Salmon	Widow Leathes	16	"	3		
Mouse		10	"	2		
Anne		6	"	2		
Resolution	Geo. McCartney, Lewis Thompson	16	"	3		
Elizabeth	James M'Adam	6	"	2		
Betty	Thomas Knox	8	"	2		
Mary	John Hamilton, James Chalmers	12	"	3		
Isabell	Hugh Eccles, Jno M'Ferran	12	"	3		
Jane	Geo. McCartney	6	"	2		
Martha		6	"	2		
Isabell	Widow Dean	6	"	2		
29 Ships		1102		222	(Galleys)	Belfast.

An Account of Shippes belonging to the Port of Carrickfergus and Creekes, and Members thereunto belonging, with the nature of the Built of each Shipp & Vessel, whether English or Irish, and which of them were Prizes, their burthen, when bought, Owners and Proprietors' Names, and the distinction of each Shipp or Vessel.

Shippes' Names.	Nature of their Built.	English Built.	Irish Built.	Prizes condemn'd in Scotland.	Forraigne and Free made Free.	Forraigne and not Free.	Bds Tunns	Foraigne when Bought.	Proprietors and Owners.
Belfast Merch <sup>t</sup>	frigott	..	..	..	..	Forraigne and not free	150	In feby 1674	Tho. Knox, Jas <sup>s</sup> Chalmers, J <sup>no</sup> Hamilton, Ja. Burnie, And <sup>r</sup> Maxwell, Tho. Aikin, W <sup>m</sup> Lockhart.
Instiquin ..	Shipp	..	..	..	Forraigne and Free forraigne and free	..	150	In Nov <sup>r</sup> 1675	G. M <sup>c</sup> Cartney, Hugh Eccles, Tho. Pottinger, & Edw <sup>d</sup> Pottinger.
Antelope ..	Shipp	..	..	Scotch Prize	..	..	200	In July 1672	G. M <sup>c</sup> Cartney, Tho. Knox, J <sup>s</sup> Chalmers, Tho. Pottinger, & Hugh Eccles.
Adventure ..	Shipp	..	Irish	..	..	..	120	..	W. Smith, J. White, Ja. Young, W <sup>m</sup> Arthur.
Anne ..	frigott	..	Irish	..	..	..	70	..	William Smith, Geo. M <sup>c</sup> Cartney.
William ..	Shipp	English	..	..	..	..	50	..	Thomas Knox and W <sup>m</sup> Lockhart.
Andrew ..	Shipp	..	..	..	..	Forraigne and not free	40	In Ap <sup>l</sup> 1675	John Hamilton, W <sup>m</sup> Crafford, Andrew Gregg.
Isabell ..	Doggar	..	..	Scotland Prize	..	Forraigne and not free	40	In ye year 1666	W. Smith, J <sup>no</sup> White, Ja. Chalmers, and Tho. Pottinger.
Katherine ..	Pinck	..	..	..	..	Forraigne and not free	40	Above 20 yeares since	W. Smith, Gabriel and Robert Holmes.
Charlemount ..	Shipp	..	Irish	..	..	..	40	..	Rob <sup>t</sup> Whytside & Tho. Chads.
Diamond ..	Pinck	..	Irish	..	..	..	40	..	G. M <sup>c</sup> Cartney Antho <sup>s</sup> Wyld, Edw <sup>d</sup> Wilson.
Providence ..	Shipp	..	Irish	..	..	..	40	..	Tho. Aikin, W. Lockhart, J <sup>no</sup> Adam. W. Smith, Antho <sup>s</sup> Wyld, A. Snickler, and W. Rauey.
Grizell ..	Shipp	English	Irish	..	..	..	30	..	William Smith.
Phoenix ..	Shipp	..	..	..	..	..	40	..	J. Chalmers, J. Burnie, A. Maxwell, Hu. Speir, and Tho. Hoome.
John ..	Shipp	..	..	..	..	Forraigne and not free	50	..	J <sup>no</sup> M <sup>c</sup> Bryde & W <sup>m</sup> Thomson.
Dolphin ..	Barque	..	Irish	..	..	..	25	..	Lewis Thompson.
Ossery ..	Ketch	English	..	..	..	..	20	..	Charles Jones & J <sup>no</sup> Fletcher.
James ..	Barque	..	Irish	..	..	..	25	..	James Glasgow.
Margaret ..	Shipp	..	Irish	..	..	..	50	..	Lewis Thompson, Tho <sup>s</sup> Owen. *
Providence ..	Barque	..	Irish	..	..	..	18	..	John Walsh.
Hope ..	Barque	..	..	..	..	..	20	..	W <sup>m</sup> Dobbin, Geo. Lockhart.
Expetic <sup>o</sup> on ..	frigott	English	..	..	..	..	50	..	Marm <sup>d</sup> Newton, Ezkl. Davies, Sam <sup>l</sup> Welby, and Rob <sup>t</sup> Huggin.
Plain Dealing ..	Shipp	English	Irish	..	..	..	40	..	John Browne
May Flower ..	Barque	..	Irish	..	..	..	24	..	Ewd <sup>d</sup> M <sup>c</sup> Bryrie, Matthew Johnson.
Helina ..	Shipp	..	Irish	..	..	..	40	..	J <sup>no</sup> Mitchell, Hugh M <sup>c</sup> Collum.
Rose ..	Pinck	..	..	Scotch Prize	..	..	80	In July 1672	Hugh Eccles, Tho <sup>s</sup> and Edw <sup>d</sup> Pottinger.
Salmon ..	Ketch	English	..	..	Forraigne and free	..	35	..	James Bodkin.
							1527		



There was some interval between these lists, the variation in detail being such as a few years might have produced. The *Insiquin* is in both. It is an old name for *Inchiquin*, the person who bore that title having been one of the famous characters of the civil wars. The circumstance of this ship having an armament of fourteen guns and a crew of thirty-five men, would countenance the idea that she was, or had been, a privateer, or a vessel of war of some kind. The second list expresses Carrickfergus as the place to which the ships belonged. This was merely formal, Belfast being yet unrecognised as a distinctive port by the Government for official purposes; but the names of the owners disclose the fact that, though there may have been partial ownership elsewhere, it is quite safe to describe them, as a whole, as Belfast ships, and the property of Belfast merchants.<sup>1</sup> The one list shows only 1102 tons, and the other 1527, as composing somewhat more than two hundred years ago the mercantile marine of Belfast—a small array as seen in the light of modern times, and in contrast with the present magnitude of the port, with its great docks, the demand ever increasing for farther extension, the princely revenue, the miles of quayage, the straightened water-way, the huge ships of iron undreamed of by the McCartheys, the Pottingers, and Knoxes of old, and one of which would more than double the capacity of their whole fleet, gabbards and all included. Yet, though these things are so, it

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<sup>1</sup> Besides these ships of Belfast at the early dates mentioned, there were other vessels belonging to the merchants of the town, or in which they had an interest, which are not recognised in the lists. Notices of two of these occur in the *Corporate Records*. The ship *North Star*, of Belfast, is mentioned therein in 1662, a dispute having arisen regarding its purchase which caused the matter to come before the corporate authorities, when it is described as of four score tons burthen. The other is the *Unicorn*, which was bought in 1662 by William Smith, William Thom, Hugh Eccles, Michael Bigger, and John Cranston for no less a sum than £618; and the enrolment of the sale to these Belfast merchants is fully set forth in the *Records* by Robert Leathes, Town Clerk.

There is also an unexplained notice in the Port and Revenue Accounts for 1664 (vol. i., K 12, 191) in which the Receiver of the Revenue takes credit for a sum of £127 4s 1d. for a "voyadge from Rouen to Dublin in the *John* of Belfast." The *John*, of 50 tons burthen, is noted in the second list of the mercantile marine of Belfast of the seventeenth century.

does not therefore follow that we are to make light of the trade of this era ; it was commensurate with the age, and ample enough, at least, to disprove the assertion sometimes made, that Belfast was a mere fishing village in the memory of persons yet living. It is a misconception, and would be an error even if applied to the Belfast of the Restoration. The shipowners of Belfast are all, it is to be presumed, in the preceding lists. The tables acquaint us with the daily occupations of those who were sovereigns of the town, or concerned in public affairs. The names of their successors at this day are as much changed as the locality in which the old business was conducted, which was generally, no doubt, close to the little creek where many of the diminutive vessels were afloat.

The Subsidy Tax is another source from which inference may be drawn of the extent of trade and of wealth in Belfast in the seventeenth century. In 1634 the Subsidy in all Ulster was £10,000;<sup>1</sup> but it is not to be learned what proportion of this sum was levied in this town, no return of such having been discovered. The Province of Ulster as a whole, in the amount of this tax, was below both Leinster and Munster ; but no doubt Belfast contributed its share to the prodigious sum of £578,000<sup>2</sup> which Lord Strafford, during his administration, is said to have gathered from Ireland under the ominous name of Subsidies. It is in 1661 that the first return for Subsidy Tax has been found for Belfast. The payment was not yearly, but occasional and frequent ; and had been, in the reign of James the First, four shillings in the pound on land and two shillings and eightpence on goods, as it also was in the time of Charles the First in Ireland. The payment made in Belfast does not represent the town in the most favourable light at the Restoration, the number of persons liable to it being in all under twenty, who were the wealthy and important members of the community. In the Subsidy Roll of the County of Antrim for 1661 Belfast is thus represented—

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<sup>1</sup> Clarendon's *Revenue and Finances of Ireland* quoting the *Irish Commons Journals*. Carte, vol. i., p. 62.

<sup>2</sup> *Clarendon*, p. 4.

## "TERRARUM TAXATIO."

Michael Harrison.....	£4	0	0
Francis Thedford.....	3	0	0
John Pegg.....	3	0	0
Thomas Harrington....	3	0	0

---

£13 0 0 Of which to the King £5 4s. 0d.

## "BONORUM TAXATIO."

Edward Reynolds.....	£5	2	6
George M'Cartney Esq.	5	0	0
William Waring.....	8	0	0
Geo. M'Cartney Gent..	3	0	0
W <sup>m</sup> Smith Merch <sup>d</sup> ...	4	0	0
Gilbert Wye.....	3	0	0
W <sup>m</sup> Anderson.....	3	0	0
John Rigbie.....	3	0	0
John Clugston Merch <sup>t</sup>	3	0	0
Hugh Eccles Merch <sup>t</sup> ...	6	0	0
William Thom.....	3	0	0
William Taylor.....	4	0	0
William Moore.....	3	0	0

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£53 2 6 Of which to the King £20 14s. 0d."

The principle on which this tax was levied is not to be understood, and may be considered immaterial as affecting the object in view, which is to reach through its specifications the position of the town in wealth and trade—which are such frequent companions—in 1661. It may be supposed, therefore, to indicate that only four persons in right of land, and thirteen of the trading community, were required or deemed able to meet the demands of the Subsidy Tax. The Earl of Donegall is not included, as the nobility of the County of Antrim were exempted from the payment of subsidies. Several of the shipowners appear on the roll, but the names of Pottinger, Knox, and many others are absent, which seems difficult of explanation. Other rolls, at intervals during the first ten years after the Restoration, record the payment of this tax in Belfast, with some changes in the

names, and a slight increase in the amount. The poundage is not expressed, and the arithmetical calculations are somewhat erroneous. This in the text was copied from the old book in the Record Office exactly as it there stands, but to make the subject more explicable or clear—if that be possible—another, drawn up in official form of 1666, is annexed in a note.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following is a full copy of the Belfast Subsidy Tax in 1666 above referred to :—

“Certified copy of a portion of a record in the Public Record Office of Ireland, entitled—‘Subsidy Roll, Antrim, 1666.’

\* \* \* \* \*

Baron' de Belfast

Vill' de Belfast

TERRARUM TAXACO.

	l
Mich' Harrison Arm'.....	iii/
Sampson Theaker.....	ii/
ffrancis Thedford gen'.....	ii/
Thomas Harrington..	ii/
	xiii
Inde Dno Regi.....	v <sup>l</sup> iii/s'

BONORUM TAXACO.

	l
George M'Cartney Arm'....	iii/
Willus Wareing gen'.....	v
Georg' M'Cartney mercator.	iii/
Hugo Doacke merc'.....	ii/
Gilb' M'Garragh gen' .....	ii/
Willus Smith merc'.....	ii/
Willus Anderson merc'.....	ii/
Willus Thome merc'.....	ii/
Alexandr Sinckler merc'....	ii/
Lewis Thompson.....	ii/
Johes Clugston merc' .....	iii/
Carolus Whitelock hospit'...	ii/ i/s'
Nicolas Garnett.....	ii/
Ricus Page.....	ii/
Thomas Owens merc'.....	ii/
Johes Clearke.....	ii/
Willus Taylor.....	ii/
	lvi <sup>l</sup> i/s'
Inde Dno Regi.....	xiii/ xixs'
Suma total'.....	xxi/ ii/s'

“I certify that the foregoing is a true and authentic copy made pursuant to the statute, 30 & 31 Vic. ch. 70.

“J. DIGGES LA TOUCHE,

“October 13, 1873.”

“The Assistant Deputy Keeper of the Records.

Returning again to the ships, as evidences of trade, it is found that in 1682 the number had increased to 67, of 3307 tons—a very great advance in probably less than twenty years, when the tonnage was 1527. Thirty-six of these vessels were engaged in the foreign trade alone, namely—

13 vessels, or 540 tons, were in the French trade.			
7	carrying	770	„ American.
7	„	500	„ Spanish.
4	„	180	„ West Indian.
2	„	130	„ Norwegian.
2	„	60	„ Dutch.
1	„	50	„ Prussian.
<hr/>			
36		2230	

The remaining thirty-one, carrying 1077 tons, were, of course, employed in the coasting or home trade.<sup>1</sup> A singular cargo, borne probably by one of these small craft, arrives here from Scotland in January, 1682, consisting of—

“ 5530 yards Lynnen Cloath.....	£253	9	2
2 Dozen Testaments.....	0	12	0
One Grosse of small bound Bookes.....	2	2	0
8 Dozen of Psalm Books—value.....	1	4	0
1 Dozen of Bibles.....	1	4	0
Two Grosse of Pamphlets.....	0	6	0
A parcel unbound Bookes.....	2	0	0
Another Grosse of Pamphlets.....	0	3	0
One Grosse of Ballets.....	0	1	6 ” <sup>2</sup>

This was quite a literary cargo, though in that particular so much overborne in value by the “Lynnen Cloath.” It was, however, creditable to the inhabitants, and bears evidence of their religious tendencies. There was no printing in Belfast, and the townspeople, so many of whom were of Scottish extraction, had

<sup>1</sup> This list of ships, with all the above particulars respecting them, is extracted from the *News-Letter* of 1793, where it is described as an important document, and worthy of preservation for posterity.

<sup>2</sup> From the *Miscellaneous Papers* in the Record Office.

to obtain their Bibles and Psalm Books from the old country. The pamphlets, so low in value, and the eighteenpence worth of "Ballets," would now be goods of price. It was an important era to Scotland; its ballad and pamphlet literature would gladden the hearts of the antiquaries of to-day, and it is not impossible that some of the contents of this precious cargo may still exist in unknown nooks and corners in the town.

In making up the history of the old commerce of the town, it is necessary to turn again to the unattractive subject of tabular details. There is now produced a list of all the Imports and Exports of Belfast in the year 1683. It may seem to be a tedious, uninteresting table, but it must be inserted. As in the case of ships in previous years, it forms a standard of reference—a perfect record of the trade of the town for one year, the counterpart of others, it is probable, for a little time both before and after it, and a true representation of the standing of Belfast in the commercial world in what must still be described as its early days.

## EXPORTED FROM BELFAST IN 1683.

To England.				To Scotland.			
Beef	...	...	52 Barrels	Bacon	...	...	1 Flitch
Corn	...	...	1567 "	Barrel Boards	...	...	345 Hund.
Herrings	...	...	102 "	Ox Horns	...	...	16 "
Tallow	...	...	1583 Cwt.	Empty Barrels	...	...	264 "
Butter	...	...	50 "	Hides, salt...	...	...	24 "
Soap and Candles...	...	...	21 "	" tanned	...	...	2515 "
Iron	...	...	55 "	Horses	...	...	831 "
Linen Yarn	...	...	181 "	Oxen	...	...	43 "
Cheese	...	...	2 "	Beef	...	...	36 Barrels
Molasses	...	...	30 "	Beer	...	...	3 "
Linen	...	...	235 Pieces	Corn	...	...	1427 "
Drapery	...	...	15 "	Herrings	...	...	15 "
Frieze	...	...	360 Yards	Ox Guts	...	...	10 "
Horses	...	...	67 "	Bread	...	...	5 Cwt.
Hides, salted	...	...	67 "	Butter	...	...	128 "
" tanned	...	...	78 "	Cheese	...	...	561 "
Fox and Otter Skins	...	...	246 "	Iron	...	...	909 "
Calf Skins	...	...	51 "	Yarn	...	...	1 "
Lamb Skins	...	...	4 Hund.	Tallow	...	...	6 "
Ox Horns	...	...	42 "	Calf Skins	...	...	25 Dozen
Barrel Boards	...	...	269 "	Goat Skins...	...	...	3 "
Goat Skins	...	...	28 Dozen	Lumps	...	...	113 "
Tongues	...	...	8 "	Tongues	...	...	16 "
Rabbit Skins	...	...	33 Hund.	Linen	...	...	12 Pieces
Timber	...	...	2 Tons	Wooden Ware value	...	...	£19
Small Parcels in value	...	...	£80	Small Parcels	...	...	£26



EXPORTED FROM BELFAST IN 1683—*Continued.*

To the Colonies.				To Holland.			
Beer	...	...	124 Barrels	Beer	...	...	19 Barrels
Beef	...	...	873 "	Beef	...	...	368 "
Corn	...	...	49 "	Corn	...	...	21 "
Herrings	...	...	3 "	Herrings	...	...	5 "
Pork	...	...	2 "	Hides, salt...	...	...	1528 "
Bread	...	...	110 Cwt.	" tanned	...	...	253 "
Butter	...	...	101 "	Bread	...	...	7 Cwt.
Candles	...	...	6 "	Butter	...	...	3357 "
Tallow	...	...	45 "	Cheese	...	...	3 "
Cheese	...	...	14 "	Tallow	...	...	249 "
Drapery	...	...	53 Pieces	Fox and Otter Skins	...	...	67 "
Linen	...	...	76 "	Calf Skins	...	...	2 Dozen
Frieze	...	...	216 Yards	To Spain and the Mediterranean.			
Hats	...	...	152 "	Beef..	...	...	613 Barrels
Hides, tanned	...	...	9 "	Beer	...	...	45 "
Stockings	...	...	63 Dozen	Corn	...	...	896 "
Tongues	...	...	14 "	Herrings	...	...	18 "
Calf Skins	...	...	3 "	Salmon	...	...	60 "
Shoes	...	...	1136 Lbs.	Pork	...	...	19 "
Small Parcels value	...	...	£12	Hides	...	...	1143 "
To France and Flanders.				Calf Skins	...	...	60 "
Beef	...	...	2663 Barrels	Butter	...	...	4315 Cwt.
Beer	...	...	147 "	Bread	...	...	162 "
Corn	...	...	2227 "	Soap and Candles...	...	...	89 "
Herrings	...	...	348 "	Cheese	...	...	165 "
Salmon	...	...	10 "	Tallow	...	...	31 "
Pork	...	...	2 "	Wax	...	...	56 Lbs.
Calf Skins	...	...	133 Dozen	Shoes	...	...	12 "
Hides, salt...	...	...	933 "	Linen	...	...	18 Pieces
" tanned	...	...	5895 "	To the Baltic.			
Bread	...	...	88 Cwt.	Beef	...	...	5 Barrels
Tallow	...	...	1855 "	Corn	...	...	830 "
Candles	...	...	10 "	Fox and Otter Skins	...	...	10 "
Cheese	...	...	35 "	Butter	...	...	40 Cwt.
Butter	...	...	25,889 "	Molasses	...	...	273 "
				Sugar	...	...	91 "

<sup>1</sup> In addition to what might be called the official list in the foregoing columns, the following is found in the *Pinkerton MSS.* :—

"In proposals relating to trade to be laid before the House, there is the following account of the timber shipped from the port of Belfast, from Michaelmas 1686 to Michaelmas 1695 :—

4,525½ dozen of clap boards.

823,605 thousand of barrel staves.

16½ lasts of screwells, with head.

136 tons of timber.

21,582 feet of plank.

"To prevent this, an Act to hinder exporting any sort of timber to Scotland is proposed. The woods in Ulster in a few years will not supply casks to export our own commodities of beef, butter, salmon, herrings, or for shipping or building. Witness the great woods in the County of Down and Antrim almost destroyed—the duty of this timber inconsiderable, and the loss great."

## IMPORTED INTO BELFAST IN 1683.

From England.							
Coals	...	198	Tons	Mum	...	24	Barrels
Iron Ore	...	310	"	Tin Plates	...	3	"
Lead	...	123	Cwt.	Glass	...	22	Cribs
Hops	...	250	"	Pepper	...	655	Lbs.
Ginger	...	22	"	Small Wares in value	...	£482	
Brown Sugar	...	1169	"	From the Baltic.			
White Sugar	...	37	"	Balks	...	2	Hund.
Holland	...	72	Ells	Deals	...	204	"
Calico	...	317	Pieces	Spars	...	24	"
Silesia Lawn	...	26	"	Steel	...	82	Cwt.
Manufactured Silk	335 lb. of 12 oz.			Hemp	...	45	"
Tobacco	...	22,227	Lbs.	Herrings	...	13	Barrels
Drapery	...	1200	Yards	Ling	...	23	"
Salt	...	7464	Bushels	Tar	...	143	"
Indigo	...	92	Lbs.	Oil	...	7	"
Hats	...	22	"	Small Wares value	...	£7	
Haberdashery in value	...	£5594		From France and Flanders.			
From Scotland.				Brandy	...	4417	Gallons
Coals	...	1250	Tons	French Wine	...	213	Tuns
Battery	...	10	Cwt.	Spanish Wine	...	16	Butts
Hemp	...	6	"	Playing Cards	...	10	Dozen
Madder	...	5	"	Cards for Wool	...	3	"
Linen	...	163,319	Yards	Glass	...	6	Cribs
Bone Lace	...	183	"	Canvas	...	1800	Ells
Mill Stones	...	4	"	Holland	...	30	"
Linseed	...	7	Bushels	Paper	...	1010	Reams
Deals	...	8	Hund.	Walnuts	...	20	Barrels
Horn Tips	...	70	"	Hats	...	343	"
Indigo	...	150	Lbs.	Hemp	...	31	Cwt.
Yarn	...	62	"	Hops	...	31	"
Stockings	...	42	Dozen	Iron Pots	...	121	"
Herrings	...	476	Barrels	Prunes	...	273	Cwt.
Salt	...	5425	Cwt.	Rosin	...	342	"
Small Wares value	...	£964		Salt	...	6304	"
From the Colonies.				Manufactured Silk	...	41	Lbs.
Oil	...	15	Hhds.	Vinegar	...	85	Hhds.
Tobacco	...	360,413	Lbs.	Small Wares in value	...	£215	
From Holland.				From Spain.			
Hemp	...	1	Cwt	Anchovies	...	12	Barrels
Barley	...	3	"	Brandy	...	2	Gallons
Cordage	...	22	"	Capers	...	111	Lbs.
Gunpowder	...	3	"	Currants	...	18	Cwt.
Madder	...	23	"	Figs	...	8	"
Steel	...	1	"	Liquorice	...	3	"
Whalebone	...	15	"	Sugar	...	2	"
Wire	...	12	"	Raisins	...	23	"
Hops	...	50	"	Rice	...	10	"
Brinstone	...	4	"	Oranges and Lemons	...	162	Hund.
Cinnamon	...	13	Lbs.	Salt	...	6950	Bushels
Cloves	...	17	"	Whisks	...	91	Dozen
Mace	...	16	"	Wine	...	108	Butts
Nutmegs	...	16	"	Small Parcels value	...	£50 <sup>1</sup>	

<sup>1</sup> This account of the Imports and Exports of Belfast in 1683 will be found in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. iii., p. 194, in an article on the subject of early Irish trade compiled by Mr. Pinkerton. The lists were found in the British Museum, and are published, without bringing out any comment on them, in the *Ulster Journal*.

Previously to the introduction of the subject of the manufactures of Belfast—chiefly of those which are extinct, and to which the record of its young commerce is so much allied—it will be expedient to notice the opinions expressed by two persons in the seventeenth century of the condition and appearance of the town with regard to its trade at that era, with some general remarks on the tables as here published.

Thomas Phillips was appointed in 1685 to survey and report on the condition of the several garrisons of Ireland, and to estimate the expenses necessary to put them in a state of repair, and the policy of doing so. He made the splendid map of Belfast of 1685 engraved in this work; and the fleet of ships which carried on its trade, as represented in the preceding lists, and as partly shown in his own map as well, must have often greeted his sight while engaged in his labour, and induced him, assisted by inquiry on the spot, to draw up the favourable report which he did of the capabilities and trading rank of the town. He says—

“Carrickfergus, as doth appear by its situation to have no command of the channel or river of Belfast, which is now the third place of trade of this Kingdom. It is one of the most considerable places in the Kingdom, having never less than 40 or 50 sail of ships before it, the place very rich and numerous and not well affected, having nothing that can give a check to any either foreign or domestic attempts. I therefore humbly leave this part of my Report to the judgment of those in whose power it is to discern more of the necessity of this affair; I only give my opinion as being upon the place. I cannot think his Majesty should be at any greater expense than to repair the Castle (Carrickfergus) for the present; and whenever that money can be spared, to let the most considerable work be done at Belfast.” The prodigious amount necessary to effect this is shortly stated in these words—“To Building a Citadel at Belfast, £42,054.”<sup>1</sup>

On the ground-plan map Phillips has drawn out the method he proposes to adopt in order to make Belfast a great fortified

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<sup>1</sup> Phillips's Report at considerable length is in the *Pinkerton MSS.* There is copied here only the portion having reference to the subject on hand—namely, the early trade of Belfast.

place. He was thinking more of war than of commerce. His recommendation was not carried out, so that it would be vain now to speculate on the effects which such a project might have had on the trade of the town; but his observations about its business and commercial reputation as seen by himself are certainly remarkable. Equally so are those of William Sacheverell, which, though made a few years later, are yet within the same historic range (1685–1698). “Belfast,” he says, “is the second town in Ireland, well built, full of people, and of great Trade.”<sup>1</sup>

These were the impressions made upon a highly-qualified official, and an equally intelligent traveller, of the trade of the town. Several more of similar character could be quoted. They are all but the opinions of persons impressed chiefly by external features, and disposed from circumstances to report more favourably, perhaps, than the reality justified. Still, that great and oft-quoted authority, Sir William Petty, estimated the entire tonnage of Ireland in 1672 at 8000 tons, while only ten years after that time Belfast—Carrickfergus included—had 3300, much more than a third of the entire amount. On the other hand, Mr. Tobie Bonnel, Head Collector of Irish Customs at Dublin, tells rather a different story. He classed the Irish ports in relative importance by a very simple, and probably a very effective method, by comparing the proceeds of the duties collected in each for the six years preceding 1669. By this mode of computation he placed Derry, Drogheda, and Carrickfergus (in the last of which Belfast was included, and formed its main branch) as equal to one another, while all were exceeded by no less than seven other ports in Ireland. Had Mr. Bonnell extended his researches to 1683 a result more in accordance with the estimate made by Phillips might have been obtained, as the trade of Belfast by that time had acquired great, perhaps unexpected expansion, and the imports and exports of that year, as here fully published, should afford the well-informed merchant of the present day abundant scope for consideration. From the copious list of these imports and exports, proof is afforded that

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<sup>1</sup> Sacheverell's *Isle of Man*, p. 125.

the two greatest trades of the town now were then scarcely in existence; these are the provision trade and the great linen manufacture. The former was represented by one solitary flitch of bacon exported to Scotland, and twenty-three barrels of pork to Spain and the Colonies; the latter by 182 hundreds of yarn and 341 pieces of manufactured linen—truly a miniature picture of what has almost made Belfast what it has become in recent years. It is true there was a large provision trade under another form, that of pork having gradually reached its present magnitude concurrently with the extension of potato culture. The substitute for it in 1683 was beef, of which many suggestive notices occur in the old Town Records, and 4610 barrels of which were exported in 1683; and linen, so far from having acquired as yet any importance, seems to have been chiefly brought from Scotland to Belfast, now the great centre of its production. Beef, butter, hides (salted and tanned), tallow, and corn were the chief articles which composed the export trade of Belfast, and their value could even be roughly estimated. The quantity of the two first-named articles might justify the observation of Sacheverell, who says—"The quantities of Butter and Beef which it (Belfast) sends into Foreign Parts are almost incredible. I have seen the Barrels pil'd up in the very Streets." The weight of the beef in the export return is undefined, but that of the butter—33,880 cwts.—is proof not alone of very considerable trade, but of much activity in a department of agricultural industry for which the country is now and has ever since been prominent. The number of hides, salted and tanned, amounted in the aggregate to 12,445; of corn, to 7067 barrels; and of tallow, to 3769 cwts.—six or seven different places receiving all these exported goods. Some small manufactures had also arisen in the town in 1683, as proved by the export of soap, candles, hats, shoes, and stockings.

Of the goods imported, 1448 tons of sea-borne coals supplied the wants of the town in 1683. The immense quantity of 382,640 lbs. of tobacco came into Belfast in the same year, almost all from the colonies, proving the hold that still favourite article had already taken of the public taste, and that Sir William Petty



did not much exaggerate when he declared that its expense to the Irish was equal to two-sevenths of the cost of food.

Though not directly connected with the trade of the town, the Poll Tax, which was in being about the period now under review, and which became very general in the reign of William the Third, affords evidence of the relative importance of Belfast with other places. The Revenue Books in the Record Office are filled with the accounts of the Poll Tax, which appears to have been an objectionable and unpopular impost. This, like the Subsidy Tax, was not a yearly payment. In 1696 the collectors of it within the Barony of Belfast certify to Sir Robert Adair, the High Sheriff of Antrim, that the third payment for the Poll Tax, due on 2nd August, had produced £222 15s. 3d., of which the town and division of Belfast paid £101. This return, as well as the Hearth-money, affords some idea of population, showing Belfast and its near suburbs to have contained half as many people almost as all the rest of the barony, if every individual paid an equal sum, and to have contributed a similar proportion of the entire Poll Tax. But the chimneys and hearths were tangible. The constant references to evasions of the Poll Tax, and the impossibility of obtaining, from various causes, a full collection of it, render its history obscure, and not to be highly valued as the foundation of any general return. It only gives some little evidence, not alone of the standing and growing importance of Belfast, but also of its poverty, many persons being mentioned as unable to pay the Poll Tax, and well-known names in the town are reported as those of defaulters for very small sums; perhaps they imagined they might justly object to so oppressive an assessment.

More to the purpose of trade is the following account of the public revenue paid to the Crown by Belfast for the years indicated.<sup>1</sup> So far as is known, it is the earliest, and is certainly

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<sup>1</sup> George Macartney had been the former Collector of Belfast, the coming in of Peter Knowles, the collector of King James's Government, not being noticed in any list. He was succeeded by Carleton, whose after career often appears in the *Treasury Papers* at the end of the century and beginning of the following one.



the most full and specific list ever yet published on the subject. There are some items in it which appear extraneous to Belfast. They consist chiefly of monies received from Mr. Jemmet from Derry, and smaller sums from nearer places, which increase the gross receipts of the year 1690. The entire stands faithfully copied from the original, but the exceptional augmentation will not fail to be noticed.<sup>1</sup>

It is at best an imperfect document, at least not possessing the broad and easily-understood items which similar reports at the present day invariably exhibit. It is sufficient, however, to show the extent of the exaggeration which declared the revenue of Belfast to have been £20,000 a-year in 1690. It was really much less, as the figures under that year show, even with all the addition to the amount apparently not derived from this town at all. But 1690 was the great year of activity and increased population; and there was a very diminished revenue in 1693, when it was not a third of the amount claimed for it in the very presence of King William.

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Richardson next held the office, then Warham Jemmet. The peculiar name "Warh. Jemmet" is set down as that of Collector of Belfast in 1693. He was a Derry man, and a captain in the popular movement in that city against the measures of the Government. The opposition to King James being rather premature, one of the articles in December, 1688, was—"That Lord Mountjoy shall interpose with the Commissioners of his Majesty's Revenue on behalf of Warham Jemmet, Esq., and other officers of the Customs, that no imputation or blame may remain on them for the involuntary compliance with the people of Derry on the late commotion."

There is a very handsome piece of silver plate preserved in the Parish Church of Belfast, and forming part of the Communion Service for more than a century and a half, and on which is inscribed—"In memory of Mary Buchanan wife to Warham Jemmet Collr of Belfast. She dyed ye 7th day of Nobr 1697 and lyeth in ye North Ile of this Church of Belfast." Jommett is plain in the inscription, but in all other places Jemmet is the spelling. The church referred to was, of course, the old one in High Street. Jemmet was Collector of Cork in 1703, and his name is of frequent occurrence in that and subsequent years among the miscellaneous papers connected with the revenue of the country. His grandson, Dr. Jemmet Browne, rose to be Archbishop of Tuam, which fact, and a romantic story connected therewith, are mentioned in *Ireland Preserved*, by the Rev. John Graham, p. 346.

<sup>1</sup> The return is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

# The Revenue of Belfast for Five Years.

Belfast, Port.

Charge.

Collectors.	1689.		1690.		1691.		1692.		1693.	
	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.	£	s. d.
Xpher Carleton.	47	7 3	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ditto Carleton.	..	..	282	10 6	436	10 5	..	..	..	..
Sam. Richardson.	..	..	583	14 7	1,242	19 9	815	6 6	..	..
Ditto Richardson.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	817	12 10½
Warh. Jemmet.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	657	0 0
To Arrears of Inland Excise recd from y <sup>e</sup> Collr at Lisburn	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Arrears of Imported Excise due at Lady day, 1689, from Mr. McCartney's Acct	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash due from the Accountant on his last year's Acct	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Arrears brought from last year's Acct	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash due from Mr. Jemmet, & brought here from Londonderry Acct	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To the Produce of Custom Inwards	2,105	12 11½	7,277	1 8	2,308	18 1½	5,168	15 1½	1,619	3 9½
Custom Outwards	201	10 11	456	9 4	436	10 4½	449	10 3½	769	12 5
Imported Excise	1,363	18 3	5,382	6 2	1,633	7 5½	3,955	17 6½	1,575	16 11½
Inland Excise of Ale Imported	56	0 0	281	18 4	0	7 6	5	7 10	0	3 9
Inland Excise	407	14 11	863	7 7½	..	..	..	..	..	..
Ale Licences	98	2 6	259	1 9	..	..	..	..	..	..
Wine & Strong Water Lic <sup>s</sup>	15	12 6	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
Fines and seizures	10	0 0	64	2 4½	42	10 8½	24	7 6½	36	15 10½
Plantation duty of Tobacco, &c.	..	..	..	..	19	14 2	25	14 4½	11	15 5
To Arrears of Quit & Crown Rents due at Easter 1692	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To ½ a-year's Q <sup>t</sup> & Crown Rents due at Mich <sup>l</sup> mas, 1692	..	..	..	..	38	9 9½	1	10 0	..	..
To one year's Q <sup>t</sup> & Crown Rents due at Mich <sup>l</sup> mas, 1693	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	76	19 9
To Cash recd of David Butle, Collr at Colraine	57	10 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of John Latham, Collr at Lisburne	100	0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of Cha. Monck, Collr at Lisburne	133	14 1	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of W <sup>m</sup> Dobbin, Collr at Strangford	260	0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of Mr. Allen, Collr at Donagade	..	..	180	0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of Capt Dobbin, als Neesham, Collr at Strangford	..	..	200	4 6	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of Mr. Neesham, Collr at Strangford	..	..	215	0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of Warham Jemmet, Collr at Derry	..	..	1,569	0 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash recd of Step. Godfrey, Collr at Colraine	..	..	87	17 0	..	..	..	..	..	..
To Cash due to this Account, & carried in Credit of next year's Account	..	..	..	..	298	13 5	115	14 5½	..	..
	4,857	2 6½	17,742	13 10½	6,414	17 11	10,600	13 6½	5,565	0 9

This money list must appear a strange contrast between the revenue of Belfast at the Revolution and the present time, and, in consequence, is deserving of special attention. The war and the military in the town added much to the revenue in one of those memorable years, but it soon returned to its normal state after the excitement had passed away. In the matter of public revenue Belfast did not rank very high. Taking the average of the five years, it only furnished one twenty-eighth part of the revenue of all Ireland as collected in 1695. To make this clear, and as a pendant to the five years' returns from Belfast, the produce of the entire revenue of Ireland for 1695-96 is sub-joined.<sup>1</sup> It may be a little in favour of Belfast, in respect of what may be called its trade revenue, that the national list is much indebted to the large sums received for quit rents, hearth-money, and Poll Tax, which are all but unmentioned in our local returns.

<sup>1</sup> A Comparison of the Produce of his Maties Revenue in Ireland for Two Years ended at—

1695.	Xmas.	1696.	Increase in 1696.	Decrease in 1696.
£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
34,161 2 8½	Customs Inwards ..	28,338 7 8½		5,822 14 11½
15,013 15 0¾	Customs Outwards ..	19,461 9 11½	4,447 14 10½	
30,649 8 1½	Imported Excise ..	26,415 16 0		4,233 12 1½
364 7 3½	Seizures ..	740 15 10½	376 8 7½	
1,009 16 3½	Plantation duty ..	265 19 3½		743 17 0
752 10 0	Prizage ..	1,425 6 3	672 16 3	
67,993 18 8	Inland Excise ..	81,592 16 4½	13,598 17 8½	
6,545 0 6	Ale Licences ..	5,273 10 7½		1,271 9 10½
1,029 4 9	Wine &c Lic <sup>s</sup> ..	1,344 10 5	315 5 8	
61,600 8 3	Quitt Rents ..	62,038 3 0	437 14 9	
21,492 14 0	Hearth-money ..	24,318 0 0	2,825 6 0	
1,806 16 0	Wool Licences ..	1,732 12 0	425 16 0	
1,416 4 7½	Casual Revenue ..	1,963 10 9½	547 6 1¾	
243,335 6 2½		254,910 18 3	23,647 6 0½	12,071 13 11½
595 14 1	Additional Duty ..	15,231 17 1¾	14,636 3 0¾	
	Poll Tax ..	37,296 8 7½	37,296 8 7½	
243,931 0 3½	Totals ..	307,439 4 0	75,579 17 8½ 12,071 13 11½	12,071 13 11½
	Net Increase in 1696 ..	.. ..	63,508 3 8½	
193,002 9 2½	Payments made to the Rec <sup>r</sup> Gener <sup>l</sup> ..	261,798 14 3	68,796 5 0¾	

This Abstract is taken from the Collector's Accounts Current for the year 1696, and examined by

(Signed)

W. BURGH, Accompt<sup>t</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup>.

[Reference — *Treasury Papers*,  
vol. xlii., No. 23.]

Desirous of placing as much as possible in one connection all that can be said of the early trade of the town, we pass on to 1709 and 1715, for which periods very copious information has been obtained on the subject. In the Surveyor-General's books for 1709, the produce of the revenue outwards and inwards, the imported excise, and the other sources from which arise what are now denominated Customs duties, of all the ports in the kingdom, are fully stated. From this report Belfast contributed, in the year 1709, £8715 to the public revenue, making it the fourth port in Ireland in that relation, Dublin, Cork, and Waterford alone exceeding it. In 1715, according to the same authority, Waterford is outstripped, Belfast paying £9755, Waterford £9097, thus making it, in spite of the bad quay and harbour accommodation, the third port in Ireland, so far as the Customs revenue paid by each could raise it to that elevation. The document containing this official report is hardly so full as might be desired, but the information here drawn from it must be deemed the best that can be procured, and there is no reason to question its general accuracy.

The articles of commerce or commodities which made up the trade of the town at the periods now under consideration are set forth at length. The paper which introduces the enumeration states that "the earliest Port Book of Belfast deposited in the Exchequer Record Office is of the year 1715."<sup>1</sup> The returns

<sup>1</sup> The information regarding the trade and revenue of Belfast in 1709-1715 is not derived from the Public Record Office, Dublin, but is contained in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, chiefly on loose papers.

The particulars for 1709 are given; those for 1715 are omitted, the gross sum only being stated. The following is a copy of the document:—

1709	{	Belfast.	Customs Outwards	...	£875	14	5
			„ Inwards	...	2809	7	10
			Imported Excise	..	2210	19	11
			Add <sup>d</sup> Duty on Tobacco	...	2729	13	3
			„ on Linen	...	1	10	9
			Prizage	... ..	80	0	0
			Light-money	.. ..	8	11	11½
					<hr/>		
1715					£8715	18	1½
					9755	10	8

*Surveyor-General's Books.*

then proceed, under that date, to classify the several imports and exports, not specifying weight or quantity, as in the earlier record of 1683, but merely their character as merchandise. They seem to be loose catalogues of the cargoes of the ships outwards and inwards for some indefinite period, so that the result obtainable is but a knowledge of the kind of commodities leaving or coming into the town. These are multifarious in number. The imports from some of the chief towns in England are noted with surprising minuteness. Those from Scotland were from twelve or fourteen of its principal ports. Even Stornoway and Isleasky (Skye) contributed portions of their productions to the merchants of Belfast. The general imports from Scotland, as they appear on the lists, were "coals, linen, yarn, salt, bark from several places, cables, ropes, trenchers, gridles, locks, sugar, tea, barleÿ, iron, fish of various kinds, flaxseed, tobacco, comfitts, old apparell, fat madder, girles new drapery, timber, staves, and kelp." The northern parts of Europe sent their produce to Belfast, as well as the more genial lands of France, Spain, and Portugal; the great trading towns of Hamburg and Rotterdam had extensive intercourse with it, and there is ample evidence that in 1715 it was a place of rising commercial importance. It is true the exports were not much changed in character since 1683, except in linen cloth, which was now finding its way more generally over the world, and in the increase of a few minor manufactures, if the frequency of their occurrence in the lists be proof of the fact, though the chief exports were still, as in past years, not those produced by very much skill, division of labour, or accumulated knowledge.

The building or Custom House in which the revenue business of Belfast was transacted may suitably close this account of its early trade. The waiter or two who at first formed the official staff did not require very extensive accommodation. Accordingly, this entry, bearing on the point, is in the Revenue Books in the Record Office—"Rec<sup>d</sup> the 9<sup>th</sup> August 1659 of Richard Edwardes Coll<sup>r</sup> of Customes in y<sup>e</sup> Port of Carrickfergus for one



quarter's Rent of our Warehouse in belfaste y<sup>e</sup> sum of fifteen shillings sterling." Though no mention is made of the purpose of this warehouse—sometimes called store—there is every probability that it represented the modest Custom House of Belfast in 1659. The name of the owner was Vickers, and several receipts from him for the quarterly rent of fifteen shillings from the Collector appear in the old Revenue Books. The Storehouse acquired in some time larger proportions, of which this is the explicit recital—

“Belfast 3 Nov<sup>r</sup> 1676.

“Whereas upon stating of the accompt of the late ffarm<sup>rs</sup> of y<sup>e</sup> great Branches of his Ma<sup>tie</sup>'s Revenue the said ffarm<sup>rs</sup> Demanded Defalcations for severall sumes of money by them Expended on the building of a Storehouse att Belfast. And whereas itt appears that the saide House lyes neere and convenient to y<sup>e</sup> Storehouse formerly there w<sup>ch</sup> was too small for the Receipt of merchants goods in regard of the great Increase of Trade in that Port. And whereas it appe<sup>s</sup> by affid<sup>t</sup> of John Magee y<sup>t</sup> there hath been a Storehouse for merchants goods about thirteene yeares last past in ye s<sup>d</sup> Towne, and y<sup>t</sup> ye Storehouse there built is of very great use to his Ma<sup>tie</sup>. It is Ord<sup>ed</sup> by y<sup>e</sup> Courte y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> sume of four hundred forty two pounds eleaven shillings and six pence sterling be and is hereby allowed to y<sup>e</sup> s<sup>d</sup> ffarm<sup>rs</sup> upon their Acc<sup>t</sup> for y<sup>e</sup> building of y<sup>e</sup> same. And it is further Ordered y<sup>t</sup> y<sup>e</sup> Lease of Thirty one yeares or thereabout of the ground whereon y<sup>e</sup> said Storehouse is built by the s<sup>d</sup> late ffarm<sup>rs</sup> be immediately assigned to his Majesty whereof y<sup>e</sup> Aud<sup>r</sup> Gen<sup>l</sup> and all other offic<sup>rs</sup> concerned are to take notice.

“GEORGE HOUGHTON.

“CHAR. MEREDITH.

JO. BYSSE.

RICH. KENNEDY.

HE. HENE.”

This was an extensive building, and the disbursement of the money which the farmers had expended is regularly set out in a paper attached to the preceding. Inhabitants of Belfast of moderate age, familiar with the old docks and quays of the town, will recollect Store or Storehouse Lane, immediately off High Street, and closely adjoining the ancient “Kea” or Creek of the Borough of Belfast. It may, from the situation and the descrip-



tion, be conjectured that the building erected by the farmers of the revenue, and the former one as well, of far smaller dimensions, for which the trivial rent of £3 a-year was paid, constituted in succession the Custom House of Belfast; and that the name Storehouse Lane, retained till modern days, was derived from this circumstance. These were the precursors of the late Custom House, which still stands, though now diverted to another use, and the erection of which in the next century will be noticed. It is also proper to observe that besides Store Lane there were Warehouse Lane and Custom House Entry, equally convenient to the water, and any of which might have been the site of the first Custom House of the town.

The Custom House affairs of Belfast were to all appearance as strict and regular in those days as in the present, when the duties of a single week, perhaps, would more than treble the revenue of the entire year. The endless bundles of old papers in the Record Office—receipts for salaries, for watching, repairs, watermen, messengers, and all the usual accompaniments of such establishments, however small in amount—were the subject of as much thought and attention by the old-fashioned officials who handled them as the weightier matters of this day to their modern successors.

The Farmers of the Revenue are often mentioned in the old books. This was the practice of the age. A certain sum was given by speculating individuals for the right of receiving the duties on commodities, or for Hearth-money or Poll Tax. Those of Belfast so circumstanced disclose some of their proceedings in the matter of the Store or Custom House which they had built; and when, in 1682, the system seems very much to have come to an end, the list of the goods and utensils they had left behind them in the different ports is catalogued and valued. In Belfast they consisted of “one whole hundred, eighteen half hundreds, Two Q<sup>rs</sup> of a hundred, a 14 lb; 4 lb, 2 lb, 1 lb; half a pound and a Quarter of a pound, *all of lead*,” valued at £7 6s. 8d; “one large Beame and Scales, one old Beame, one small pair of scales,” all worth £3 10s. 0d; “one chest and one press for

Goods, £1 10s. 0d." The preceding were all "in the Warehouse at Belfast." In the watch-house was "one little table, Tonges and Grate, 16s;" and "in the Custom House at Belfast, one large Table and Desk, one small Table, two Iron Grates, one pair of Tongues, Fire shovle and Bellows, all value for £1 5s. 0d., and an Iron Chest for money worth £5 0s. 0d." They had, besides, at Belfast "One Bigg Boate, with sails, rigging, and Oars, worth £6 0s. 0d; a wherry with all tackling and necessaries worth £4 0s. 0d.; at White House an old Yaule and Oars worth £1 0s. 0d., and at Holywood one Boat, a small yaule, rigging, sails and oars, all old, and valued at £3 10s. 0d."

Such were the little belongings, the working tools—the plant, so to speak—of the Custom House of Belfast in the year 1683.<sup>1</sup>

This concludes all that can be introduced regarding the early commerce of Belfast to the end of the seventeenth century. Incidental notices which bear on the trade of the town necessarily occur in other places; and the subject, it is unnecessary to say, is the most important and interesting which could possibly attract the attention of the present great mercantile community of Belfast.

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<sup>1</sup> From Exchequer (Revenue) Orders, Michaelmas, 1683, and which were supplied by Mr. Hennessy, of the Record Office, Dublin.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## EXTINCT AND EARLY MANUFACTURES OF BELFAST.

**E**VIDENCES of extinct trades and manufactures may be partially derived from the lists of the imported and exported goods of 1683. Whence came the fifteen tons of molasses that were exported? The manufacture, or rather the refining, of Sugar was long one of the staples of Belfast; but that there should have been molasses, or, more correctly, treacle—which is a bye product of the sugar-house—exported so early as 1683, was a convincing proof that the trade was much older than had been generally supposed. No great hope appeared of being able to establish this opinion in an undeniable manner till the will of the first George Macartney was examined. The sugar manufacture existed here in 1683, and as making strict proof of the fact the following quotation from the will of this great leader of Belfast trade is inserted:—

“I leave and bequeath to my sons Arthur and Chichester all that my moiety of all materials of the Sugar House in Belfast, and all other utensils thereof, that is to say, my moiety of all and singular the pans, stoves, potts, and of all other utensils and necessities whatsoever to the same belonging or any wise appertaining or therein used or serving (excepting only all sugar, molasses, and syrups) together also with the House and land in Belfast commonly called Wilkin’s tenement on which I lately built an addition or enlargement of the said Sugar House.”

This is perfectly conclusive. The very locality of George Macartney’s sugar-house may be identified from it. Wilkin’s tenement is mentioned in the will as forming part of the premises; and in a lease given to Macartney by the Countess of Donegall in 1678 he receives “The Tenement or Half Burgage

Share in Belfast containing in front 42 feet, and extending backwards 126 feet, called Wilkinson's Tenement, on the south side of Broad Street." This was the name of that end of Waring Street next the Commercial Buildings, where, it is thus made to appear, the first sugar-house was, and where it is certain the last was—both very possibly at the same spot. The entire quantity of raw or brown sugar imported in 1683 was 60 tons, all, or the greater part of which, may have gone through the rude refining process of the day in Mr. Macartney's manufactory or some other. The import of white sugar was under two tons. No tea or coffee appears among the imports, these two now indispensable articles not having yet penetrated to this remote region; so that no sugar being called for in that direction, the quantity in the market was sufficient for the moderate wants of the little town and the country around, and the most of the treacle could be spared for the Baltic, to which quarter it was chiefly sent.

But George Macartney, unknown as his history has been in connection with the refining of sugar, was not the only person who could be denominated a principal in the trade. In 1719 Hendrick Negins died in Belfast; in his will he describes himself as a sugar baker, and adds—"I leave to my son Henry Negins all the utensils and working materials of my Sugar House." This sugar refiner was probably a foreigner. The evidence, however, is unquestionable that this trade in Belfast dates from the seventeenth century, and it continued till the present, some persons still living being able to remember its dissolution in Sugar-house Entry. There is little doubt that it was first introduced into the town by the enterprise of George Macartney, or by some of the Dutch refiners, who in the seventeenth century carried the business beyond their own country. It greatly increased also with the general trade of the town. In 1750 there were two large sugar-houses here, one in Rosemary Street and the other in Waring Street and Sugar-house Entry; another also is spoken of in the volunteer era as being in Legg's Lane. The partners in both of the old establishments comprised many of the principal persons in Belfast. There is every reason to

think that this manufacture was carried on in the last century with success. In 1760 Benjamin Legg died. A long obituary notice mentions "that it was chiefly owing to his skill and activity that the refining of sugar has been brought to a very great perfection here."

It may be permitted to mention that the refining of sugar, of such great antiquity in Belfast, could surely at the present time be revived with advantage. It is free from any trammels or difficulties, and, independently of the desire which should be felt to have a variety of occupations as conducive to general and permanent benefit, this is one every way suited to the locality. Some enterprising person or firm in the town would render a public benefit to it if an opening could be seen to make this important trade again a Belfast manufacture. Bristol claims an antiquity of two centuries for its sugar manufacture, now so great.<sup>1</sup> Belfast, where it is unknown, could also claim no less, for though Mr. Macartney's manufactory is only specifically described in his will in 1691, no doubt can be entertained that it had been in operation many years before.

The next manufacture to be noted, but also as an extinct one, is that of Iron. There were exported from Belfast in 1683 nearly 50 tons of manufactured iron, all produced in the neighbourhood of the town. In 1641, Captain Lawson, who made himself so honourably conspicuous by the bold front with which he met the Irish rebellion here and in Lisburn, describes the iron-works, "in which he had some stock and interest," as two miles from Belfast. This was on the Lagan—New Forge and Old Forge deriving their names from the circumstance that at both places, and many others throughout the country, iron was manufactured.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> From "A Paper on the Manufacture and Refining of Sugar in Bristol," read by Mr. Chamberlain at the meeting of the British Association in that city in 1875.

<sup>2</sup> In the great deed for remedying the defective title of Lord Chichester, completed in the year 1640, these words occur, "Ardoyne, *alias* Ballyardone, *alias* Ardeen, with a new forge there." Would this language be applicable to anything else than a forge or furnace for making iron from the ore? If so, it was nearer to the then town than any of those on the Lagan.



In 1658 iron formed a portion of the cargo of a ship leaving Belfast, its estimated value being then £16 per ton, and in 1683 it was probably not less. The ore from which this iron was made came from England—fuel, the other main requisite, being supplied by our abundant native timber. Into Belfast, in 1683, were imported 310 tons of iron ore, consisting of the rich Cumberland hematite; and in other years probably a greater quantity. The iron produced—from the quality of the ore, and on account of the kind of fuel used—was of the best description, resembling the Swedish of the present time. Persons of some distinction were engaged in this trade, notably Sir George Rawdon. His works were at Lambeg and also at Strandmillis, close to Belfast,<sup>1</sup> and he was, in truth, the great ironmaster of the day in this place. This manufacture was very extensive in other parts of Ireland. The rebellion of 1641 greatly injured it, and it disappeared entirely with the extinction of the Irish woods. Still, it must have continued about Belfast into the eighteenth century, as in the imports in 1715 iron ore came into the port from Lancaster and Whitehaven.<sup>2</sup>

More important, it is probable, than either the sugar or iron

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<sup>1</sup> “Also all the Dock of Strandmellis then or lately in the possession of Sir George Rawdon Bart. who established the first iron works at New Forge on the Lagan.”—*Recital of Leases of 1692*.

<sup>2</sup> It is interesting to note, in connection with this subject, the changes which have occurred since this manufacture existed in the neighbourhood of Belfast. Within the last nine years an export of iron ore from the County of Antrim has sprung up, which is rapidly assuming very important features. This ore is also red and brown hematite, not so rich as that of Cumberland and North Lancashire, but still of great value, and mined without much expense. It is singular that much of it is exported to the very same quarter from which the English ore was brought in 1683. From County Antrim there were probably sent in 1875 not less than 100,000 tons; and when certain other mines in addition to those now working come into operation, and the extensive means of transport by railway be finished, the quantity will be greatly increased. A large proportion of this ore is exported from Belfast, though raised at a great distance from the town. The iron trade in all its branches now (1876), in common with every other, is suffering under a great depression. There may be a present diminution in the export from Belfast and other places, soon, it is hoped, to pass away. The figures of the weight of ore exported will thus be seen to be liable to constant fluctuations, but the quantity named above for 1875 cannot be far from accurate.



trade was the tanning of Leather in Belfast, and which, though not like them extinct, is now, in proportion to the increased size of the town, quite inconsiderable. It was a natural, in those times an indispensable, adjunct to the trade in beef and cattle, and the most important persons in the town were directly or indirectly concerned in it. So early as 1638 James Smith, a tanner, makes his will in Belfast. John Rigby, one of the old sovereigns, Buller, the Warings, and several more whose occupations are occasionally noticed, were all in the same trade, and close attention to the "Searching and Sealing of Leather" was embodied in the Chief Magistrate's oath when assuming office. In 1647, when the town was sadly oppressed with military cesses and other difficulties, the Court still continued to look after the leather, and made an order relaxing, on account of weather, some regulations to which the manufacture was subject. Indeed, tanners, butchers, coopers, salters, and packers of beef were rather important persons in the seventeenth century, forming in union the active operators in the most important trades in the town. This continued for a long period, and so extensive was it, that a person, apparently well-informed on the history of early tanning, has stated, though possibly with some little exaggeration, that even at the close of the eighteenth century the staple manufacture of Belfast was that of leather, and that the capital sunk in it exceeded that which was invested in the cotton and linen trades united. Another authority has stated that there were thirty-six tan-yards in Belfast at this time; and its earlier importance is established by the fact that in the patent of 1669 to the Earl of Donegall, confirmatory of the grant of 1640 to remedy defective titles, this clause is inserted—"To build a Tan House in Belfast and tan Leather," as if they had been forgotten in former grants, and the growing increase of this trade now rendered their introduction desirable. How entirely the tanning trade is reduced from its ancient, and even its comparatively modern, eminence it is unnecessary to mention.

The time at which the manufacture of Salt originated in Belfast is not known. It will be seen that it was very largely imported

in 1683 to meet the requirements of the provision trade. In 1773 the salt and lime works at the lower end of Waring Street are advertised to be let. The advertisement describes a project then in operation there of manufacturing salt and lime in union, the vapour from the latter condensing the sea water or salt rock in vessels exposed to its influence. In the middle of the last century the manufacture of salt was considerable. The "Old Salt Pans" are mentioned in an advertisement in 1757, and so long back as 1743 Wilson, Sharp, & Co. receive from the Dublin Society a premium for the manufacture in Belfast of the greatest quantity of salt, amounting to 450 tons.<sup>1</sup> Impelled by the natural wish to have home-made salt at hand for their own immediate use, the manufacture in some limited form may have been as old as the provision trade itself. England, Scotland, France, and Spain, however, all supplied the article. The foot of Waring Street, now so utterly changed, may have been its original seat, and at which place, so lately as the year 1800, Thoburn and Munfod, the proprietors, advertise that lighters can come up to the works. This was by a well-remembered dock straight down to the river from the bottom of Waring Street. Salt-works in Glenarm were advertised to be let in 1769, and are described as convenient for importing rock salt and exporting white salt.<sup>2</sup> The former is now raised in the country a few miles distant from Belfast, great mines having been discovered within the last few years near Carrickfergus, so convenient and so great, indeed, as to have attracted much attention.

The existence of this enormous deposit of salt rock opens

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<sup>1</sup> The authority for this is Gilbert's *History of Dublin* as mentioned on a detached slip of paper among the *Pinkerton MSS.*, but neither volume nor page is quoted.

<sup>2</sup> The manufacture of salt is probably more ancient in the country than this Glenarm notice, or any connected with Belfast yet discovered proves. It is found that in the Inquisition on the Attainder of Lieutenant Edward M'Ilderry, in D'Alton's *Army List of the Army of King James at the Revolution*, he is described as of the "Salt Pans, County of Antrim," but the locality in the county is not named.

prospects of unexampled prosperity—some of the most important industries of the world depending on that material as their indispensable foundation, and, unless there be some obstacles in the way, which no one has yet pointed out as insurmountable, Belfast might become a centre of trade and manufacture, from its salt rock, of more enduring character than that to be derived from any textile fabric whatever, or, at least, less exposed to fluctuation or opposition from other quarters.

The antiquity of the Linen manufacture in Ireland is a favourite topic on which to expatiate. As a domestic manufacture, it was known and practised in very distant times; but as entering into the exports of the nation as one of its chief products, it is comparatively recent. In 1680 all Ireland did not export linen to the value of £6000 per annum, but in 1741 its exports had increased to £600,000.<sup>1</sup> It is true we are accustomed to read of the chiefs and priests of Ireland in pre-Christian times being clothed in robes of linen, and of Henry the Eighth and earlier monarchs making laws regarding it as if the article were peculiarly an Irish manufacture; but the history of linen as connected with the Belfast of modern times is quite a different subject, and certainly appears to bear out the account expressed of its condition in 1680 and 1741, for neither in the Seventeenth Century Records, nor any other early documents relating to Belfast, is any mention made of it as entering into the list of exports, or receiving any marked attention from the inhabitants. Among the early general exports of Ireland both linen and linen yarn are certainly noticed as articles of foreign traffic, but they are trifling in comparison with the hides, beef, timber, tallow, wool-fells, and other unmanufactured productions. Drogheda is mentioned as exporting "great store of yarn in 1611;" but the authority declaring this did not visit the towns north of it, including, of course, this place and Carrickfergus, "as believing them," he says, "of no great trade, and that principally in fish,"

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<sup>1</sup> *Calendar of Treasury Papers, 1702-1707*, pp. 20-27—Introduction, referring to Anderson's *History of Commerce*.

though he conjecturally adds, "yarn may be transported from them in small quantities."<sup>1</sup> Very small indeed it must have been if it existed at all, when so long after as 1683 the export from Belfast both of yarn and linen was so insignificant as scarcely to deserve notice. Even the merchants of Drogheda and the Mayor of Dublin, when, "in the late Queen's time" (Elizabeth), permission was given to export 3000 packs of linen yarn in five years, objected to the granting of such a privilege, on the ground that all Ireland would not produce so much in the time limited by the Patent.<sup>2</sup>

It is not required to enter into any account of the general history of linen, or of its great antiquity, but entirely the condition and practice of it as a manufacture in Belfast, founded on such documents as have been procurable. Many more are so; pamphlets, essays, and other publications of the last century by writers who were generally well aware of the vital importance of the linen trade to the north of Ireland—where alone it flourished—abound in all directions. On a business scale it can only be said to date from the time of William the Third, not a very distant period; and the extent to which Belfast and other parts of the country have been indebted for their knowledge of it to that monarch, through the medium of the French refugees, whom he was instrumental in sending here, is very generally admitted. Unless the Treasury papers of the reign of Queen Anne be the "shaking bog" which documents of the same character of earlier ages are represented to be—which classical phraseology means worthless and unreliable evidence—the great linen manufacture of the north of Ireland had almost its origin with the expatriated Huguenots. As is well-known, Lisburn was the place of their settlement, and in the Introduction to the *Calendar of Treasury Papers* (1702–1707) it is stated that—

"In 1699 the linen trade was of no manner of consequence. What

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<sup>1</sup> See opinion of Robert Cogan touching the Customs, *State Papers*, 1603–1624, in which the ordinary exports of all the seaport towns are described.

<sup>2</sup> Note in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

there was manufactured of it was in the north, and the people were entirely ignorant of the art of managing and working flax, spinning the yarn and whitening the cloth ; and they were absolutely strangers to the looms and other utensils necessary to the work.<sup>1</sup>

This statement is borne out by many notices and official letters in the *Calendar*<sup>2</sup> of the progress of the Lisburn colony ; of the desire to locate the foreigners in a more central part of the kingdom, where the introduction of the trade would be more generally beneficial than if confined solely to the north ; of the complaints of English merchants, notwithstanding the avowed engagement of the Government to support by all means the Irish linen manufacture, that their own trade would be affected by it, as, if so improved as it seemed about to be, it would interfere with the import of Continental linens in exchange for their woollens ; of the number of foreign looms introduced, the expense required to establish them, and other relations of interest and historic value. They all tend to prove that the real linen trade of Belfast and the north of Ireland began at the time referred to—namely, the commencement of the eighteenth century ; and when we see how rapidly the spinning of linen yarn by machinery has arrived at its present magnitude in this town, how the younger persons in this great trade speak and think of it as something old, though it is in reality of late origin, and therefore if the same progress should have marked the course of the earlier manufacture, there is no reason to suppose why that which was incipient at the beginning of the eighteenth century may not have been the greatest trade within the town in the middle of it. Notwithstanding all this, and though it may be correct to state that in the middle, or even at the end of the seventeenth century, linen in none of its forms had made any progress here as a commercial or exported commodity, it may be equally true to pronounce that, as a handicraft manufacture, it had been known and practised in Belfast, as elsewhere in Ireland, time out of mind. Ideas of its adaptability for Irish

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<sup>1</sup> Introduction to *Calendar of Treasury Papers, 1702-1707*, p. 20.

<sup>2</sup> See especially in the 1702-1707 *Calendar*, pp. 412, 461, 485, 495, 509.



trade must have been long prevalent, and in 1654, Cromwell's Government, with their customary liberality, decreed that linen cloth might be exported from Ireland to England and Scotland duty free.

The impulse given to it, however, by the French immigrants, the petition presented to William the Third in this town for its protection, the favour shown to it as an equivalent for the suppression of the Irish woollen manufacture, the bounties and premiums resorted to for its advantage, are historical facts, and compose the general history of this great trade. That it had made some little way in Belfast at the beginning of the eighteenth century is not to be doubted. There was a yarn and linen market in this town in 1729—possibly many years before. The regulations connected with it are alluded to in a letter of one John Smith in that year,<sup>1</sup> in which, among much that is technical, he offers his best services “for inspecting the yarn and linen market of Belfast.” In the same year the Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer, writing to Mr. Secretary Southwell, says that “silver is so scarce in Ireland that the people in the north are not able to buy yarn for want of small money.”<sup>2</sup> This sentence almost comprises an epitome, at least, of a branch of the trade as conducted from the time it was written, down to modern days. The flax was spun and the yarn woven by hand. The former is all but extinct; the latter still continues in the country districts to much extent; but the importance of both in their palmy days can now hardly be estimated. The spinning of flax and weaving of yarn, from their antiquity, from the raw material being the produce of our own soil, from their congeniality to the customs and habits of rural life in the north of Ireland, were the great occupations of the people. It is extraordinary to read of the place which hand-spinning and weaving occupied in nearly every household. The wives and daughters of multitudes of small farmers paid the rent with yarn, sold generally by themselves in the nearest market. Females of a better class, even ladies of

<sup>1</sup> Civil and Miscellaneous Correspondence, Record Office.

<sup>2</sup> Correspondence of Dr. Marmaduke Coghill with the Hon. Edward Southwell.



title, learned to spin; and frequently the sons of the gentry were taught to weave, that they might be prepared to take part in the business if necessary, or at least thoroughly to understand its close relation to the agriculture and trade of the country. The successive improvements in spinning and hand-weaving, and all technical matters, are here irrelevant; but the north of Ireland—possibly the vicinity of Belfast—acquired, if we may believe the *Edinburgh Annual Register*, an early reputation for improvements in the former. It relates, on the authority of Alexander Creidie, that—

“He remembered that so important an accomplishment was the Irish way of spinning then reckoned, that many of the most notable housewives of that day sent their daughters from Scotland to the north of Ireland to acquire it, who, after a noviciate of six or eight months, returned thoroughly instructed.”<sup>1</sup>

Numerous bleach-greens arose around Belfast in the last century, some of which in enlarged forms remain to this day. Respected inhabitants of the town participated in the linen manufacture. In 1764 Dr. James Ferguson, of Belfast, received a premium of £300 from the Linen Board for the successful application of lime in bleaching.<sup>2</sup> In 1770 the use of sulphuric acid was introduced, up to which time buttermilk was used. An item connected with this is here noted, which, though not new as a fact, is rather full in its details, and affords a strange contrast between the rude, tedious processes of the past, and the celerity with which bleaching is effected in modern times. It is a petition from John Wolfenden, of Dunmurry, dated 17th Sept., 1754, to Lord Donegall and Trustees, setting forth—

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<sup>1</sup> Reference to this statement in the *Edinburgh Annual Register* is taken from the *Pinkerton MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> From an article by Mr. Charley on “Flax.”

Dr. Ferguson above-mentioned was grandfather of the present J. F. Ferguson, Esq., of Belfast, and a probable connection also of Dr. Victor Ferguson, of the same place, of the early part of the eighteenth century, though no account has been obtained of the relationship if it existed. Dr. Victor Ferguson is highly praised in *Presbyterian Loyalty* for veracity, probity, and moderation. The first of this family, however, is said to have come to Ireland as a surgeon with King William’s army.

"That contiguous to his Bleach yard lieth about 30 acres of Land which he thinks would maintain 15 cows which would be a great help towards supplying him in sower milk, absolutely requisite for whitening Linnen; in furnishing himself with which he is at an extravagant Expence both as to the milk and Carriage, besides being frequently disappointed, much to his Loss, and the disadvantage of the Linnen Trade, the chief support of the north of Ireland."

A neighbour of Mr. Wolfenden, called William Magee, also sends a petition to the same quarter, and in the same year, proposing to pay four shillings<sup>1</sup> an acre for fifty acres of Ballydrain which he had previously held from Mr. Johnston, the middleman, "it being the highest that land ever paid;" and

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Magee seems to have improved a little on his first offer, and writes the following letter to the Earl of Donegall and the Trustees. It should surprise some of the residents of Malone, whether they be connected with land or linen. Could the value and present condition of Mr. Magee's farm now be ascertained?

"The Memorial of William Magee Linen Draper & Farmer. Y<sup>r</sup> Memorialist is fully sensible of the trouble he has so frequently given his Lordship & Trustees by so many applications & only begs leave to say that Seven Shill<sup>s</sup>  $\text{p}$  acre (the price that Mr. Gordon says is put upon his Farm) is by much above its value, & what no man can pay from its produce—That it has been by hard Labour & a close application to the Linen Bussiness & Farm that y<sup>r</sup> Memorialist has hitherto been able to pay his Rent & Support his Family; & rather than now in his advanced years be obliged to look out for a place to settle in, & from a prospect of a Certainty of 41 years Lease . . . y<sup>r</sup> Memorialist will endeavour to pay Five Shillings  $\text{p}$  acre. . . . Y<sup>r</sup> Memorialist now begs leave to say, let the consequence be what it will, or should he be obliged to end his days amongst the French and Indians in America that he will never again give y<sup>r</sup> Lordship and Trustees any farther Trouble.

"WILL. MAGEE."

Two of Mr. Magee's neighbours give their opinion of him and of the farm in these words, accurately copied—

"Wee know the above Memorst & he has made it his request to us to declare our opinion of his farm wch to a quite & Industerus neighbour In comon Justice wee could not Refuse.

"Wee have known his s<sup>d</sup> farm upwards of these thirty years & upon an averidge durieng y<sup>t</sup> time he has not had three times his Seed Increase, the Seed Included : and y<sup>t</sup> take from s<sup>d</sup> Farm his Blach green & about four Ackers more, the whole Remdr in the most favorable seasons will not feed fatt Ten Cows of three hundred wt each

"JOHN STEWART.

ALEX<sup>r</sup> LEGG.

"Ballydrain 24 Dec mbr 1756."

Note in Mr. Gordon's Handwriting—

"Mr. Clarke agreed to give 6<sup>s</sup> p<sup>r</sup> acre."

then he proceeds to say what may, perhaps, be thought new and interesting, that he could not have paid the said rent "were it not for the advantage your Memolist has by a Bleachyard that your Memolists Father made above Forty years ago; and besides the Linning, your Memolists Family carries on a Manufactory of Thread which never was in any perfection carried on in the Contry untill your Memolist set it on foot."

In another petition—for the case was urgent—Magee again refers to his "Bleachyard," stating more explicitly that he also carries on the "Linnen Thread Manufactory, being the first of the kind upon my Lord's Estate." Even the small Belfast river at the back of Mill Street was in requisition for this manufacture, a petitioner for a renewed lease in 1757 declaring that the linen trade, and there were probably others along the stream, had long been carried on at the place. On September 11th, 1746, a long advertisement is in the *News-Letter* offering premiums by the Belfast Society to those selling the best and largest quantity of linen cloth, and also to the seller of the second and third largest quantities—the premiums to be settled every Tuesday after the market is over.

The town weavers formed an important handicraft:—

"They assembled, about 200 in number on the 29 January 1756, met Stewart Banks the late Sovereign on his return from England on the Long Bridge and presented him with a Silver Bowl of the value of £20 in grateful acknowledgment of his extraordinary vigilance and impartiality in the execution of his office. The weavers had on this occasion a very genteel appearance, with drums beating and colours flying."

In 1765, again, it is related that, on the occasion of a visit which Lord Donegall paid to Belfast, after his reception of the Corporate body, the clergy, and the principal merchants and inhabitants, the linen weavers of the town and bleachers from the neighbouring greens, forming a large number of well-dressed men, were received by his Lordship. They marched, it is said, with drums, colours, and music, and offered their congratulations to the Earl on his arrival in Belfast.

The standing which the trade had acquired in the middle of the century is fully proved by its being put prominently forward as one of the main reasons in favour of an Act of Parliament to improve Belfast, that it was a place which had acquired great importance in the linen business, "which would be much impaired if the contemplated Bill should not pass."

To meet the requirements of the linen trade, inside and outside the town, the first Linen Hall was projected in Belfast in 1739. In that year—

"The Earl of Donegall was pleased to send orders to several workmen to draw up a plan of a Linen Hall conformable to the one erected in Dublin but not quite so large, and proposeth to have such a one built at his own expense on the ground which his Lordship caused to be walled in off the sea in Catharine Street in Belfast."<sup>1</sup>

To this Linen Hall the Earl of Donegall contributed £1500, or is said to have done so; and its anticipated benefits and facilities are expressed at length in 1739, the statement being—

"That as this north part of this Kingdom exceeds all other parts thereof for making Linens where that manufacture hath been for some time past carried on to such height and perfection, and this Port being a very safe one where Ships are already stationed to carry Linen Cloth and Yarn from hence to London and other parts of England, and shipping very plenty, it's not doubted but on erecting of a Linen Hall in this place, under proper regulations and other suitable encouragements from his Lordship, merchants from all parts who formerly bought quantities of Linen in Dublin will be induced to buy here where it can be afforded much cheaper by which means this place may become a principal mart for Linen Cloth and Yarn."

It did become a principal mart for linen cloth and yarn, and the above document expresses quite clearly the state of the case. "The Linen Hall in Dublin was the mart to which all the merchants repaired with the cases of bleached linen finished and ready for sale; there the English traders attended and made their purchases." The inconvenience and expense of sending

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<sup>1</sup> *News-Letter*, June, 1739.

linen to Dublin on cars and carts from the north of Ireland, the place of its production, were long apparent, and yet it was not till the present White Linen Hall, as it was called, was established, many years after this, that the desirable change could be said to have been effected. The sale of brown linens in Belfast and throughout the country was a different branch of the trade.

The project of the Ann Street Linen Hall, however, was not carried out with due celerity. Seven years after its initiation, the following account of it, and which shows at the same time something of the general condition of the linen trade in Belfast at that period, is found:—

“10th June 1746. Whereas the Linen Trade of the town of Belfast is greatly increased, and many considerable Drapers in and near the said Town having much business of various kinds to despatch there cant possibly attend the adjacent markets to buy white and brown Linen, but to prevent any Inconvenience to the Country from the said Drapers not attending said Markets, they are, one and all, determined to give constant Attendance for buying Linens at the Linen Hall Yard of Belfast every Tuesday and Friday from the 16th day of this instant May, at the usual Hours, and will give great Encouragement to such Persons as bring Cloths to said place to sell of good Breadths.

“And the Right Hon. the Earl of Donegall being determined to give all imaginable encouragement for promoting that valuable Branch of Trade has ordered Shades to be erected to said Yard, not only for the convenience of said Drapers but all such Persons as come to buy Linens; and his Lordship for the further service of that Business, soon purposes to build a Linen Hall there at his sole Expense and to do what else may be found for the advantage of said Trade.”

This is signed by William Macartney, by the desire of above seventy linen drapers, and to it the following note is appended:—

“That the Linen Fairs of Belfast are to be held in said Hall, and a proper place for a Yarn Market will be erected in the Center of said Yard.”

The precise situation of this, the first Linen Hall of Belfast, has not been ascertained, much less its appearance or extent. The protracted building of it would rather signify imperfection.



On 13th July, 1756, an auction is advertised of the old Linen Hall in Ann Street, which year was the termination of its existence.

The next Linen Hall was in Donegall Street, about where St. Anne's or the Parish Church now stands. It was established in 1754, and is frequently alluded to in the newspapers of the day. In an advertisement of 1763, notifying the opening of the King's Arms in North Street, the public are informed that a road (Long Lane) from the stables leads out almost opposite the Linen Hall in New Street (Donegall Street). When the church of the town was about to be erected in 1774, the place on which this Linen Hall stood was deemed to be the most suitable site for the purpose. It was accordingly chosen for the church, and a spot in the same street—the present Brown Linen Hall—given in its stead. Over the gate of the latter—now, from the changed condition of the trade, a deserted market-place—the date, 1773, may still be seen. It was to this enclosure the order of George Black, the Sovereign, as advertised in 1775, relates, enforcing, under a fine, “the sale of brown linen cloth to the Linen Hall yard; and the market for yarn to Broad Street, otherwise Waring Street, from the corner of Skipper's Lane to the corner of Bridge Street.”

It is almost unnecessary to repeat here, what has frequently been done by others, the nature of the trade in the last century in the Belfast Brown Linen Hall, and the numerous similar markets in the principal towns throughout the country. The linen bleachers or their agents travelled about in groups, like a small troop of cavalry, from market to market, on horseback, for society and security, spending almost the entire week in this way. In the market-places they were elevated on stools, or tables, or small built permanent standings, receiving the webs for examination and purchase from the weavers who stood beneath them. The grass-grown and deserted standings yet remain in the old hall in Donegall Street. The quantity of linen bought in Belfast in this manner was not so great as in some other towns, the newspaper estimate of 1784, for instance, making it



amount only to £1000 per week, while the purchases in several places, now but satellites to the great linen capital, much exceeded that sum. But this subject is really inexhaustible; what has been related can be considered nothing more than a few unconnected jottings of a past time, not so generally noticed as the broader features of this trade—a trade which has been long known in Belfast in one form or another, and is now, in its modern state of spinning and weaving by power, with its numerous collateral branches, the very mainstay of the town. There are now (1876) about forty linen-spinning mills in Belfast and the immediate suburbs, many of them immense establishments, and to a number of which power-looms for weaving the yarn produced are attached. Yet this spinning trade, on which so much of the prosperity and advancement of the town depends, is not yet fifty years in existence, and it will require all the sagacity, prudence, and economy of those engaged in it to continue Belfast in the future, as it now probably is, the greatest centre of the linen-spinning trade in the Empire.

To this very imperfect sketch of the most important manufacture in Belfast it will only be necessary to add a few words of the White Linen Hall, the large and now almost venerable building which forms the termination of Donegall Place. The ground on which it stands was granted by the Earl of Donegall, and described in 1784 as—

“That parcel of meadow ground being part of the Castle Meadows situate on the south side of the Town and Castle of Belfast, in trust, to permit a Market House to be erected for the Sale of White Linens to be managed by a Committee and for no other purpose whatever.”

This describes its general use and purposes to this day. In 1787 a meeting of the subscribers was called to determine on the plan for the centre building. To enter more minutely into the history of this establishment would be unnecessary. Some notices relating to it, topographical or otherwise, appear in other places, and it is only proper to add here that the laying of the foundation stone of the Linen Hall was attended with as great

ceremony as that which accompanied the initiation of the Poorhouse a dozen years before. The details are in the newspaper of the period, which gives, in addition, an insight rather curious to the present inhabitants of the town and neighbourhood of changed habits, ideas, or expressions. It tells us that—

“The Master of the Orange Lodge with the Wardens and Brethren, and accompanied by the members of other Lodges, together with the Sovereign, Burgesses, and principal inhabitants of the Town walked in procession; and that, in aid of the Building, the Orange Lodge presented the Managers with £100. The grandeur of the procession on this occasion could be equalled only by the public spirit that gave rise to so important an undertaking.”

But Orangeism had a different meaning in 1784 from that which has been attached to it in more recent years.

From a very small beginning in the last century the Cotton trade of Belfast sprang into immediate activity. It was, as is generally understood, introduced into the Poorhouse, or Charitable Society's Buildings, to employ the younger inmates of the house in productive labour. This was in 1777, and in 1779 and many subsequent years advertisements are frequent for the sale of cotton thread, yarn of various degrees of fineness, cotton candlewick, gloves, and stockings, “all being the industry of the children in the house.” No less attractive did this industry prove outside the Poorhouse. It became a universal favourite, both from the easiness of the manipulation and the profit derivable from it. Cotton yarn was spun in many of the poor kitchens of Belfast, and small mills, or large for the time, were by degrees established in various parts of the town. There was a cotton mill in Waring Street, in the present century, worked by a horse. This mill is advertised to be sold by auction in 1798, and is described as “John Haslett's Factory in Waring Street with Carding Machines, Spinning Jennies, and an Horizontal Wheel for turning the Machinery.” In 1796 “a Cotton concern is advertised in Mill Field with a large wheel, 32 feet in diameter, which, with one horse, is capable of turning six carding machines.” Several mills of this kind were in the town,

particularly in Millfield, North Street, and the neighbourhood of Smithfield, all kept in motion by the same means. In a short time the cotton industry found its way into distant parts of the country, far away from its humble origin in the Poorhouse of Belfast, and was worked at first by hand or horse power. This was soon inadequate, and in 1785 there is "a petition to the Irish Parliament from Nathaniel Wilson of Belfast and others for aid to promote the erection of machinery for spinning cotton by water for warps." This, either by public assistance (which is not likely) or private enterprise, led to the establishment of a cotton mill at Whitehouse, which is said to have been the first of large size in Ireland. The earliest great cotton mill in this town was in Francis Street, off Smithfield.<sup>1</sup> These increased in number, like the more modern flax mills, till they reached in the early part of this century about fifteen, and the mass of the operatives of the town were then cotton-spinners, as they are now flax-spinners.

The very early state of the cotton trade in Belfast is rather peculiar. In 1789 the news paragraphs of the town were—"We are assured that a Company of Scotch gentlemen is formed for establishing some of the Paisley manufactures in this neighbourhood, particularly that of muslin, in order to which 300 families are to be brought over;" or, "Olivia Tomb thanks those who were pleased to send Goods to be bleached at her Green near the Whitehouse last season, and informs her friends that she is ready to receive Cambricks, lawns, muslins, cottons and calicoes on 1st February which will be finished with care and expedition;" or, "Fustian and Cotton Yarn Dying and Finishing,—John Eady at the Mill Dam Belfast lately returned with workmen from Manchester and will finish to any pattern in the Fustian Trade;" or, "The Basin Field to be sold on which is a House facing Mill Field Street." "The manufacture of cambrics and bleached cotton goods was extensively carried on at the Basin Field,"<sup>2</sup> a delectable spot, as it now appears to all who may pass

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<sup>1</sup> Letters of an Octogenarian.

<sup>2</sup> Letters of an Octogenarian in newspaper of 1868.

that way, for a manufacture so clean and cheerful. So great was the estimation in which cotton-working was held in Belfast that it entirely for a time supplanted the linen. In 1790 there were 500 cotton looms in the town; in 1806 the number had increased to more than 600 looms. Cotton was brought direct from the place of its growth, and the bales landed on the quays of Belfast. It has been stated that there were at one time forty-six firms engaged in the numerous branches into which the cotton trade had divided itself. To enter into any detail of these numerous ramifications would be beyond our reach. It is enough to say that this once great manufacture has almost left the town, for though not extinct—there being one or two large mills still spinning cotton, and much business done in cotton fabrics—it is no longer a trade for which Belfast is much distinguished, at least in comparison with its former state. Cotton-printing extensively followed the introduction of the preparatory branches, and at the conclusion of the last century and in the early years of the present numerous establishments were engaged in this business; but as they were chiefly or altogether in the country, notices of them cannot properly be introduced here.

No evidence exists that the Woollen manufacture was ever of much importance in this town. Friezes were among the exports of 1683, but there is not any proof that they were town manufacture, nor is the quantity considerable. John Rousley, living in 1670 “in the Fall of Mylone,” speaks in his will of his “Loomes and weaving Geares,” but no account is given in the document whether these were woollen or linen, but most probably they were the former. John Rigby, in 1669, disposes of “eight acres of Dutch land<sup>1</sup> over against the Tuck Mill,” which is a term proving work in wool. Richard Radcliffe is a more pronounced woollen manufacturer, ordering in his will, in 1712, “all the working tools in his Dye House and Weaving House and the furnaces, press, and all other things belonging to my trade to be sold.”

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<sup>1</sup> Dutch land is a curious local term, thought to mean “low-lying land.”

Radcliffe's place of business was in Mill Street, and he was probably one of several drawn there by the water which has attracted in later times some of the great manufactories of Belfast. The tuck mills—at least one—were even then almost within the town, and there were doubtless several in its vicinity. These mills were probably, as they have since been, but for thickening and smoothing the home-made woollen cloth of the country. They could not have formed even diminutive woollen factories, in the modern meaning of the term. At the same time, Radcliffe's words imply the existence of this trade in a limited form, where it might probably have extended if restraining laws had not interfered to check it. Late endeavours have been made to revive this manufacture, which, it is earnestly hoped, may prove successful; but the linen alone has overshadowed all other textile fabrics in and around Belfast, and has monopolised the most of the capital, matured knowledge, and youthful energy.

The Shipbuilding trade of Belfast in its present aspect is, like the linen manufacture, a subject chiefly for those who are investigating the modern condition of the town. Shipbuilding, according to the wants of the time, and in accordance with the maritime character which Belfast from its very origin assumed, was one of its early trades, and it is incorrect to assert, as is often done, that nearly the conclusion of the last century witnessed its beginning. Through the seventeenth century, as is proved by the list of 1663, many vessels of the small dimensions then only required were built in Belfast. Of the twenty-nine belonging to the town at that time, several are described as having been built in it and near it. If the ship of 150 tons, which endeavoured to carry off to a land of peace and freedom the persecuted Presbyterians in 1636, was really built in this town, as stated,<sup>1</sup> it is proof of the existence at that remote time of the possession of unexpected appliances, and a shipbuilding importance not corresponding with the character of the

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<sup>1</sup> See *Sample of Jet Black Prelatic Calumny*, p. 155, as quoted in the *Historical Collections*.



small boats so long after generally in use. It may have been some great exceptional effort not renewed so early in the century. In 1699 the ship *Loyal Charles*, of 250 tons, was built and launched here.<sup>1</sup> Shipbuilding was a known craft in Belfast, though subject to the usual trade variations. A ship carpenter is mentioned in the Records as one of the very earliest operatives; and certainly, from 1712 to 1736, persons so named are almost as numerous as those of other workmen following the more essential occupations of a small town.<sup>2</sup> There was, no doubt, more extensive shipbuilding at the end of the last century, and later; and many of the old inhabitants will recollect what a great affair the launch of a small wooden vessel was in former times. These have been succeeded by works of stupendous magnitude. Except the flax-spinning, there is no enterprise which has been more quickly or more largely developed, or which has made Belfast more noted, than its modern shipbuilding.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Joy's MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> *Presbyterian Funeral Register.*

<sup>3</sup> The account of the quite recent origin of shipbuilding in Belfast disclosed in the following extracts is not in accord with that which has been given in this work. Though this narrative comes from a most respectable and trustworthy source, it is at the same time certain that there were ship carpenters in the town between 1712 and 1736, and also at an earlier period. The accuracy of the two lists of ships belonging to the port in or about 1662, and the statement that many of them were built here, is quite authentic, but it was no doubt small at the best, and the trade may have diminished or almost come to a suspension when Mr. Ritchie commenced operations. Writing in 1811, Mr. Ritchie says that he visited Belfast in March, 1791, and, seeing what he conceived was a favourable opening here for shipbuilding, proceeds to state—"I returned to Belfast on the 3rd of July following with ten men and a quantity of shipbuilding apparatus and materials. . . . When I came to Belfast there were only about six jobbing ship carpenters. Being without any person to direct them they were not (by that means) constantly employed, as the vessels belonging to the town were purchased and repaired in England and Scotland. Since I came here I have brought from Scotland several ship-joiners, block-makers, and blacksmiths. . . . In 1796 I engaged with the Ballact Corporation to build the graving Dock which I completed 1st January 1800. The ship yards and graving dock stand on ground that I reclaimed from the sea by embankments and quays fronted with stone. When I came to Belfast in 1791 the Liverpool traders consisted of four sloops, each about 80 tons burthen, and the London traders of four brigs, of 160 tons each." And after expatiating on the great advance which had taken place in the present



Following in the wake of the great manufacturing establishments have been the Iron Foundries, the making of steam engines, the fitting and machine shops, and other kindred works for which the town has acquired so great eminence; and yet how small the beginning! The first foundry that ever was in Belfast, so far as the writer has discovered, was on unenclosed ground on the east side of Donegall Street, one of the entrances to it being from the present Hill Street, then called Pot-house Lane, from the circumstance of this foundry being in it, or at its termination. On a day in 1775 Stewart Hadskis, the proprietor, had cast a yarn boiler capable of holding 700 gallons;<sup>1</sup> and the fact is made

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century, in which he was writing, he says—"The greatest part of the traders and West India vessels have been built in Belfast—several of them with Irish oak; and it is but justice to say that for elegance of mould, fastness of sailing, and utility in every respect, they are unrivalled in any of the ports they trade to." This is all exceedingly creditable to Mr. Ritchie, and proves him to have been a public benefactor to the town. It makes him, however, the beginner of shipbuilding in Belfast, which, according to documentary proofs, is not correct, though he may have been, and may be denominated, its modern founder. That such a view was generally entertained is shown by the communication of a newspaper correspondent a few years ago, who writes thus—"Eighty years ago, and when the merchants of Belfast exulted in the fact that their town rejoiced in the possession of more than 3000 houses, William Ritchie, a sturdy North Briton, commenced shipbuilding on a piece of waste land that lay at the end of the docks, and was called Corporation ground. At that time the mercantile marine of the capital of Ulster consisted of fifty-three vessels of 9200 tons carrying power. Considerable expense and much loss of time were incurred by owners of vessels when repairs were required, as in such cases the ships had to be sent across channel for such purposes. The opening up of this new branch of industry, as started by Mr. Ritchie, was consequently hailed with great satisfaction by ship owners." There is much more of the like purport, but relating to this century, both in Mr. Ritchie's own communication and in that of the writer above quoted. They prove the influence which Mr. Ritchie had on the progress of shipbuilding in Belfast, relate the number of vessels he had built, mention to what parts of the world they traded, the introduction of steam navigation, and that the firm of Ritchie & MacLaine constructed in Belfast the first steamer ever built in Ireland. Mr. Ritchie gave his name to one of the docks of Belfast, and, as a small tribute to him, it may be noted that his descendants have at this day two handsome water-colour drawings of the year 1800, showing views of his works at that time, a vessel in process of building, all the bustle attendant on such operations pictorially, with the part of Belfast near the shipyard as it then stood, and the Cave Hill in the distance.

<sup>1</sup> A casting of this class must have been rather rare, or considered an occurrence deserving of commemoration, as a similar newspaper notice occurs somewhat later to much the same effect.

the subject of a newspaper paragraph, which states that the same was "believed to be the largest furnace ever cast in this kingdom."

There are two manufactures—now all but extinct in the town—which must in their day have excited great interest. These are Pottery and Glass. The ancient pottery work of Belfast dates from the seventeenth century. Sacheverell, the observing traveller whom stress of weather forced upon our shores in 1698, was taken to view this sight of the town, and remarks, with too much brevity—"The new Pottery is a pretty Curiosity, set up by Mr. Smith the present Sovereign, and his predecessor Captain Leathes, a man of great ingenuity." In a tour of Dr. Molyneux to the north of Ireland in 1708,<sup>1</sup> and in which he also makes some striking remarks about Belfast, the Pottery does not escape his attention, remarking of it—

"Here we saw a very good manufacture of earthen ware, which comes nearest to Delft of any made in Ireland, and really is not much short of it. It is very clear and pretty, and universally used in the North, and I think not so much owing to any peculiar happiness in the clay, but rather to the manner of beating and mixing it up."

This was, it might almost be said, the Belleek of its day ;<sup>2</sup> but so difficult is it to preserve what is fragile or not sufficiently valued, or even to obtain a history of any manufacture which has ceased to exist, that the subsequent account of this Pottery with so excellent a beginning is undiscoverable. There is no narrative of its progress from the time of Sacheverell and Molyneux, or a notice anywhere that the fine ware of which they speak continued to be made, for instance, in the middle of the eighteenth century. There is, at the same time, on the map of 1791, a "Pottery" and a "China Manufactory," marked as

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<sup>1</sup> This is in Trinity College Library.

<sup>2</sup> There was a very interesting letter from Mr. Pinkerton in a Belfast newspaper on this subject a few years ago. He understood it well, and took much interest in it. One of his objects was to show that the famous Burslem ware was made, or the clay prepared for it, as was that of the Belfast manufacture, in the manner related by Molyneux.

distinct establishments, though in close proximity, and both in the locality in which the manufacture first began in or before 1698. The latter must be that now to be described. The deed of partnership of those who revived it or began it in 1791 makes no allusion to the old works, and its tone would induce a reader to think that those concerned were commencing an entirely new project. The partners in 1791 were Thomas Greg, S. M. Stephenson, M.D., and John Ashmore. Specimens of ware, deemed by good judges to have been made in Belfast, are still in existence, but whether made by this new company of 1791 or at an earlier period we are left in doubt. The specimens, however, are two teapots of Queen's ware; "one is decorated with two armed Volunteers in the uniform of the First Battalion of Belfast, and the other with the name of an individual burned in beneath the enamel."<sup>1</sup> In 1793 the partners craved aid from the Irish Parliament, stating in their petition that, "recognising the advantages arising from a manufacture of Queen's and other kinds of ware, such as is made in Staffordshire, they united themselves into a Company for that purpose, and by their exertions have carried this manufacture to a greater perfection in the County of Down, near Belfast, than was ever known in this kingdom, having

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<sup>1</sup> These two teapots require some few further remarks. On one of them there are two well-drawn pictures—one representing a country market, with the goods exposed for sale in waggons and wains; the other, a sailor taking leave before embarking in a ship which is close at hand. On this teapot the name Martha McClelland is burned into the enamel, which was that of a lady who was born in the year 1758, and married to a Belfast merchant, Mr. John Neilson, in March, 1780. It may, therefore, be reasonably inferred that this teapot was made before the last-mentioned date. It is somewhat larger, but identical in shape, and apparently in age, with the other on which the two armed Volunteers are shown, and if both be of Belfast manufacture, as has been conjectured, a pottery, making very handsome Queen's ware, must have been in Belfast before 1791, the date at which it was newly commenced by Greg, Stephenson, and Ashmore. But there is no evidence of such, and we are therefore thrown on the other alternative that these teapots were really not made in Belfast, which is rather strengthened by the fact that on the bottom of the one on which the Volunteers are depicted there is impressed in very small letters the word "Wedgwood," the name of the great potter, which, if not indicative of his manufacture, must have been a usual descriptive mark placed on Queen's ware, of which he was the inventor, when manufactured in any place—a circumstance not very probable.

erected buildings, imported machinery, and brought workmen from foreign places." The price of coals interfered to place this manufacture under difficulties ; the application of the proprietors, though favourably reported on, was unattended to, and the making of fine pottery did not acquire permanence in Belfast. This work continued till 1799 and was then relinquished.

The Glass manufacture was much more recent than the original pottery works, dating only from 1785. The deed of partnership comprised the names of thirteen respectable persons of standing and influence in the town, who contributed as a capital to carry on the manufacture of glass the sum of £100 each. In 1789 it is spoken of as an infant manufacture, and in all the views of the town of about that date the most conspicuous objects in the picture are the glass-houses pouring out volumes of black fumes, the only large smokes which then clouded the prospect. They advertise in this latter year Irish crown glass, made in Belfast, superior to that from Bristol, and anticipate that it will be an article of considerable export to America. There may also have been a connection between the glass and pottery works shortly after, which this newspaper notice of 1792 appears to favour.

"England derives a great portion of her wealth and power from manufactures ; and Ireland, particularly in the town and neighbourhood of Belfast, has of late years made considerable progress in some of the most useful ones. As fire-clay and sand are essential materials in making Glass and Fine Pottery Ware, gentlemen having these on their estates should send samples to Smylie & Co., proprietors of the New Glass House, or Messrs Greg, Stephenson, and Ashmore, proprietors of the Pottery. In addition to the lately established manufactures above mentioned, the foundation of a Bottle Glass House on the largest scale has been laid by Smylie & Co. and when finished we shall have three glass houses in Belfast when within these few years there was not one."

The substance of this extract is correct ; two of these glass-houses still stand, though applied to other uses ; the other was on Peter's Hill, and was making flint glass in the present century, but has long since disappeared. So early as 1787 apprentices for glass-cutting and glass-engraving are advertised for, and

occasional notices of the manufacture would countenance the idea of a moderate measure of success. In 1791 a new company was formed, with twelve partners, when the capital in lands, buildings, material, and stock had risen to a very large amount. They proposed to make window-glass, glass bottles, or any other kind of glass required; but from some cause—it is said the extra price of coals, and the absence from the locality of some of the raw materials of the manufacture—the business in the large works finally ceased. Smaller manufactories near the original seat in Ballymacarrett from time to time took it up, and a late attempt to revive it on a good scale has unfortunately proved unsuccessful.

Paper in Belfast is also one of our dead and gone manufactures. It was a project of Francis Joy. The date of its origin has not been ascertained, but it may have been almost contemporaneous with that of the *News-Letter*. It was certainly in operation in the year 1767. Soon the memory of it will pass away, though the old paper-mill, standing so picturesquely almost in the midst of the tidal water, is well remembered by numerous inhabitants, the Mall close by it being a favourite and retired walk along the bank of the then pleasant Blackstaff. It ceased to suit the age, and the paper manufacture found a more favourable locality.

Not so well known are the old Mustard works of Belfast, from which Mustard Street derives its name. In 1789 Richard Calwell & Co. advertise “that they have erected very extensive works in the town for the manufacture of Flour of Mustard,” and subsequently many notices and commendations of this manufacture are to be found.

The Milling trade of Belfast, though so far from being extinct that it has of necessity increased with the increasing trade of the town, may suitably be inserted in this account of our early manufactures. It is not so strictly a manufacture as the others, but may without much inaccuracy be classed with them, particularly as it is of such antiquity, and its consideration will probably be the means of introducing a few original remarks.

The old mill in Mill Street, still called the Manor Mill,



originated with the English settlers. References to this accompaniment of civilised life have already appeared in connection with the Earl of Essex and his followers in 1574. Among the first necessities of the English of Elizabeth's time, in their desire to introduce the habits of England into the country, were mills and brewhouses;<sup>1</sup> and accordingly our own settlement was found in the sixteenth century to require such annexations as well as other places. No direct proof exists that the old Manor Mill of Belfast was erected so long back, but the probability is that either then or soon after it was built. It was the mill repeatedly mentioned in the old leases of the Chichester family as possessing peculiar privileges, and is traditionally spoken of at this day as having ground meal for Cromwell's soldiers, which it no doubt did, and for soldiers and inhabitants long before that time. The mills above it in the course of events followed the original structure. In 1691 there were four water-mills in this place, the property of George Macartney. His acquirement of them is thus related—

“An Indenture made the 9th of July 1686 between Sir William Franklin Knt. and Letitia Countess of Donegall his wife of the one part and George Macartney of Belfast on the other, whereby Sir Wm. Franklin and his wife in virtue of the Deed &c. for the sum of £115, and in consideration of £300 laid out in repairing and altering the old Mills, building a new Corn Mill, a new Tuck Mill, a new brick House and other improvements upon the Premises—Demised unto him the Three Water Corn Mills, called Belfast Mills, two whereof are commonly called the Lower Mills, and the other the Upper Mill called the Wheat Mill, with the Mill House, Mill Hills, and land thereto belonging at the rent of £120. A Fourth Water Corn Mill lately built by him

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<sup>1</sup> A brief note is introduced here in illustration of early mills, and in a place with which Belfast has been always more or less associated. In the *Calendar of State Papers*, July, 1574, it is said—“To have one windmill set up at Carigfargus for that the mill there cannot serve to grind for the victualling of 1000 soldiers, without the which we shall not be able to furnish them except we be forced to grind with querns at excessive charges, besides the wastes that fall thereby.” There was a water-mill at Carriekfergus at that time, and long before, but the windmill was probably built at this very period, the stump of it still remaining at Windmill Hill, on the Belfast side of the town.



where the old Tuck Mill stood ; three plots or parcels of land next adjoining said Mills containing 18 acres with one little plot lying between the said Upper Mills and the Corn Mill containing one Rood, also the old Brick House as now new built with a Garden and parcel of land containing 10 Acres and 2 Roods at the Rent of £15—To hold for the term of 61 years at the above Rents with the value of £3 yearly in Sugar<sup>1</sup> at such rates as he commonly sells the same or £3 in lieu thereof, and £3 for a Heriot on death of him or other chief tenant. Enrolled 29 June 1686.”

It would be difficult from this indenture to trace distinctly the different sites of the mills here enumerated. They are shortly described by Mr. Macartney in his will as his “four water Corn Mills, Tuck Mill, and lands thereunto belonging,” and are directed to be dealt with as his other leasehold and large chattel property. The Manor Mill was one of the number, and, with equal certainty, the “Fall Mill,” as it was named, and which presumably was the site of the present Belfast mills. It was afterwards leased in 1698, under the name of a water corn mill, “commonly called the Fall Mill,” to John Pope (?) for “£18 a year and four couple of good fatt Hens,” binding him to keep the dams, water-courses, running “geers,” and machinery all in order, and evidently descriptive of mill requirements long in being. Though no reference is made in this lease to flour manufacture, George Macartney’s, of earlier date, explicitly mentions “the Wheat Mill,” and in whatever state it was in the time of the latter, it most probably so continued in the hands of his successor. It is only necessary to say that the milling trade of Belfast is of very early date in the town, and that the little Manor Mill still stands. The Fall Mill was in existence long

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<sup>1</sup> The observation as to the modicum of sugar to be delivered to Sir Wm. Franklin and Lady Donegall is curious. It is that which proves that the manufacture existed as early as the date of the lease of the mills at least, and is so alluded to in the article on the early history of the sugar trade.

The house and improved grounds mentioned in this lease are most probably those represented in the map of 1685. They closely adjoin the mills. In the Seventeenth Century Topography such is conjectured, and this lease tends to confirm the conjecture.

before the date of the lease to Mr. Macartney in 1691. In the large Expenditure Roll of the Donegall family there are these words—"1666. Paid for the building of the Fall Mill, viz. Timber, Lime, Stone, iron work, and labor, and all other materials £81 3s. 3½d." This amount is very indistinct, being at the edge of the Roll. In another place, but in the same year, there is an entry denoting the making of a payment "for repairing the water course of the Fall Mill." These loose entries prove that the first Earl of Donegall expended money on the Fall Mill, or built it altogether in 1666.

The Brewing of Beer in Belfast is as old as the time of Queen Elizabeth. Those who accompanied the Earl of Essex, encouraged by that personage, introduced it in a small way in accordance with their English habits. The Brewhouse is mentioned as part of their general undertakings. We have no account how the brewing trade prospered in the town till 1659, when, in a book of the Inland Excise in the Record Office, there is a distinct table giving the names of all the persons who brewed beer in this town in that year, the quantity made by each, and the amount paid as duty or licence. There were in 1659 so great a number as fifty-seven individuals making beer in Belfast. The greater number of these only manufactured it for their own consumption, and were not, therefore, brewers in the modern sense of the term; but many also made the article for retail either by themselves or others. The return is for November and December only—esteemed the most favourable season for brewing—so that it affords no proof of the production for an entire year, other months being greatly less, and in some the manufacture was altogether suspended. In the two months, however, the fifty-seven brewers made 252 barrels of strong beer, and nine of small beer. The largest makers were Josiah Martin, John Rigby, William Thom, John Whitelock, Charles Whitelock, and George Dunckan, but several names of principal Belfast people are in the list. The most singular thing in this return is, that though there is a column for "strong waters," the two products having had then

as now a natural companionship, it is all but blank, there being only one person mentioned as distiller, who produced in the two months the incredible quantity of eighteen gallons, opposite to which is placed in the cash column a sum not calculated to have affected the Exchequer materially, being only three shillings. The returns of all the towns around show a similar disparity, though we are not thence to infer that the people were entirely ignorant of the flavour of alcohol, both wine and brandy from foreign parts finding a market in Belfast in early times; but the vast preponderance of beer is evidence of the very material change which has taken place in the public taste since 1659.

Another return in 1683 shows that this preference for beer still continued, and that the manufacture had advanced in a greater proportion than the increase of the population. There were now 150 dealers in beer in Belfast and its near precincts, Whitehouse, Carrmoney, and Malone. Out of this great number, thirty sold strong waters; the licence for doing so was only five shillings. As statistical information, or exhibiting the customs of the time, it is noteworthy that so very great a number of persons are found making and selling beer in so limited a population. The columns in this case are made up with much apparent care and accuracy, and out of the entire there are only forty, opposite whose names there are written on the margin, "Retaylers and no Brewers;" leaving it to be inferred that the remainder, 110 in all, were brewers, as brewing went in those days, which was in reality a very small home manufacture. Those not aware of this may be puzzled to account for the multitude of brewers which they may have heard of as existing at one time. High Street, Waring Street, and Castle Street had all several breweries. George Martin in his will, dated 1678, refers to his little brewhouse in High Street, as several others also do. This method continued through much of the last century, but gradually the public breweries, manufacturing for sale only, and on a scale quite beyond the ideas of George Martin and his compeers, overran the little retail and domestic breweries, as being more convenient and economical.

The manufacture of *usquebaugh*, *aqua vitæ*, or strong waters has run quite a similar course. It is an extremely ancient manufacture in Ireland, being noticed so early as the year 1460, and was doubtless known and practised long before that period. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth Irish usquebaugh was a very usual present to send to friends or persons of influence in England, and specimens of the distilling apparatus of that period are in various museums. We do not find any such gifts sent from Belfast or the north of Ireland, and are without any knowledge of its beginning and progress here. There were many distillers in the town in the last century who manufactured the article in the most rude and insignificant manner, sold it in glasses or small quantities in their own premises, and, it is said, sometimes carried kegs of it on horses' backs to the fairs and markets in their neighbourhood to regale the assembled crowd, to many of whom it was an entire rarity, but there is no reason to think that it was the less acceptable on that account. It has become, however, as is well known, the usual beverage of the Irish nation. The small distillers of the past time, with their quarts and pottles, have all long since been supplanted by huge establishments in which great ingenuity and vast capital are employed, and which produce a sufficiency of the liquid to steal away the brains of too many of our population.

The revenue derived in 1659 from the beer made in Belfast for the two principal brewing months amounted to £31 18s. 1½d., which was two and sixpence per barrel or thereabouts, the charge being then on the beer and not on the malt from which it was produced. This had greatly increased in 1683, at which time the beer revenue in Belfast Walk, as it was styled—which phrase included the town and the small dependencies near it—amounted to £137; that on wine for the year to £24; and that on home-made strong waters only to £8 3s. 0d.

From another source of information, the favour bestowed in far past days on these now important manufactures is learned. This is through the medium of the Excise Revenue for the year 1657, being two years before the earlier of the records already

described. In a much-worn book in the Record Office, on the back of which is impressed "County of Antrim Inland Excize 1657," there is this memorandum—"Belfast Towne. Mr. Wm. Leithes, Mr. Nicholas Gardner, Mr. Richd. Wall, and Mr. William Tom £162 0s. 0d." This, from the context, may be considered the entire Inland Revenue accruing from the town in the year denoted; or else the sum paid by the persons named, who farmed it, or were accountable for it. In any case, it is introduced here as evidence of the extent of manufacture only, and it is certainly not concerned with one of the extinct trades of the town. This revenue was derived from "Beer and aqua vitæ," and perhaps a few more unimportant products, and would almost seem to have exceeded that of 1659. The book in which the names of the four Belfast persons occur as connected with the Inland Revenue of the town supplies other facts. Thus, near the names of Leithes, Gardner, Wall, and Tom there is a heading styled "The Barony of Belfast except the Towne of Belfast: Captn. Wm. Harrison (and another whose name is illegible), £78;" from which, if the meaning and explanation given of these figures be correct, Belfast paid rather more than double the excise duty of the entire barony—a faithful proof of its growing trading importance. It also now in this line of trade exceeded Carrickfergus, the town and Corporation being returned in 1657 at £151 as the yearly amount of home or excise duties. The book is altogether a very valuable production—the silent record of the comparative wealth and condition of "Belfast Precinct," or Down, Antrim, and Armagh Counties (which words and names are written in large characters on the first leaf), and the proceedings of the Commissioners, who had under their superintendence not only the trade, but all the civil and ecclesiastical matters of the three counties, are copiously related. The writer recently spent much time in examining this and various other books of similar import for the early trade and general history of Belfast, and a thorough search through such books in the great depository in which they are contained would bring to light on many subjects



a vast fund of quaint or interesting facts applicable to all parts of the country.<sup>1</sup>

There are also some small crafts of less importance than the preceding, which should not be altogether forgotten. The most noted of these was probably the manufacture of Ropes, which is of some antiquity, though not traceable to the seventeenth century. John Street, it has been said, was called formerly the Old Rope Walk, which is capable of proof, the locality being referred to in the year 1800, in connection with a building lease, under the title of "the north side of the Old Rope Walk." The manufacture of ropes was carried on in 1758 by John M'Cracken; but whether at this place, or whether he was the first to begin it, is not known, though, taking into account the early maritime character of Belfast, it is likely ropes were made before 1758.

The craft of Coopering was very important in Belfast in the seventeenth century, there being frequent notices in the early Town Records of strict regulations regarding it, which all probably culminated in the following curious method of keeping the coopers in order so lately as the year 1764. The casks made by the coopers of the town in that year were found of insufficient timber and defective workmanship, "whereupon the Sovereign caused all such casks to be collected, and they were burnt in the public street, under the Weigh House."

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<sup>1</sup> The very year (1683) that trade was so brisk in Bibles and Psalm Books, there seem to have been about one hundred persons concerned in the manufacture and sale of beer in Belfast alone. Of these many are mentioned on the margin of the list as "Retaylers of Beer and Brew themselves." The excise duty, as mentioned in the text, on a barrel or thirty-two gallons of strong beer was 2s. 6d.; every thirty-two gallons of small beer 6d.; all aqua vitæ or strong waters made or distilled for sale paid fourpence duty per gallon, with this provision, that "wine and strong water duties were agreed for, yearly, according as the circumstances of trade and times do offer and give encouragement, paying as License for Sale Two Shillings for each wine, and one shilling for each strong water License to the Collector." This was certainly encouraging. The duties and licences varied as in the present day, therefore in different books different scales are frequently mentioned. There was altogether a considerable trade carried on in beer, probably greater proportionably than in the present day.

Such were some of the old trades and manufactures of Belfast. Some have left it, perhaps never to return; while many of a new description have been invented by the taste or necessity of modern days, and are in full vigour now, which were utterly unknown to the inhabitants of Belfast in the seventeenth century.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF BELFAST.—EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

**I**N the beginning of the fourteenth century the Church of the district in which Belfast is, stood somewhat more than a mile from the site of the modern town. The graveyard remains, and fragments of the building were visible within memory. The edifice was called at this remote period the "White Church."<sup>1</sup> At the time of the Reformation this designation was amplified or altered to that of the "Church of St. Patrick of the White Ford."<sup>2</sup> At the latter time it was also called Shankill, or the Old Church. It was the mother church of the district,<sup>3</sup> and to it were attached several dependent chapels or "alterages," more or less distant from the parent stem. The very first of these, named as existing in 1306, and which is also most probably the same which has precedence in the "Terrier," or Ecclesiastical Register, at the Reformation, and which, in point of place, was the nearest to Shankill, is the Chapel of the Ford, the future Church of Belfast, and on which site, or near it, at this day a sacred edifice still stands—St. George's, in High Street.

No satisfactory explanation has ever been given of the meaning

<sup>1</sup> Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities of Down, Connor, and Dromore*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 184. The words in full are—"Ecclesia de St. Patricii de vado Albo. The Prior of Down hath it. Six Alterages and the Church is called Shankill. The Vicar pays in Proxies 10 sh.; in Refections do.; in Synodals 2 sh.—22 sh."

<sup>3</sup> No vestige now remains of the old church of Shankill. A large mound alone marks the spot on which it stood. The Font is still in the graveyard; it is a rude block of stone not less than three feet in length, and of proportionate thickness. The cavity or basin for the water is also very large. If the stone has ever served for a font at all—as tradition avers, and in which general opinion concurs—no object, either sacred or profane, could have been formed more likely to last for ever. There is no other monument of antiquity in the graveyard; the oldest tombstone, even, is one recording the death of Homer Jackson 8th April, 1689.

of the term "White Church," as applied to the old church of Shankill, and it might almost be thought that by an evolution of title—if such language be permissible—the name, however derived, was carried away from the old building and bestowed in a corrupted form on the Chapel of the Ford, and that it became by the Inquisition of James the First "Ecclesia Alba de Vado," *i.e.*, the White Church of the Ford; and also "Ecclesia de Albovaddo alias Belfast"—the Church of the White Ford, otherwise Belfast. These comparatively modern terms would appear to be more applicable to the Church of Belfast than to the old building at Shankill, then in ruins; but they are corrupt terms, or, at any rate, not specific or clearly to be explained. Belfast Church had risen to some little importance, and the preceding names may have become interchangeable in ordinary language, or by uninformed scribes applied to both. If confined properly to the old church only—and the heading of the Inquisition would so imply, as it says "the Church is called Shankill and has six alterages"—a difficulty with respect to the first of the six would be explained. It is called Crookmouth (Creekmouth), and if this could be accepted as the "Chapel of the Ford" of 1306 under another designation, and one descriptive of its physical features, an explanation might be arrived at. If not so accepted, that chapel of the early days would seem to be omitted in the list, as, if both expressions do not equally mean the Church of Belfast, it is impossible to explain satisfactorily where or what was "Capella de Croockmock." The nearest other ecclesiastical building to the town was at the place now called Friar's Bush, but it, though on the verge of Cromac as now understood, had an independent position. It was a friary, of which no accurate information has been obtained, and is called in the Inquisition of James the First, Ballynebraher, alias Friarstown; but there may have been a chapel or alterage here likewise attached to the mother church of Shankill, as a very learned<sup>1</sup> authority avers that there was, that it was named Capella de Kilpatrick, and is the second on

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Reeves' *Ecclesiastical Antiquities*, p. 185.

the list, which so far strengthens the argument, therefore, of the Chapel of the Ford of 1306 and the Church of Belfast town, or the Crookmouth, of 1622 being identical.

There is much obscurity about the history of these ancient churches, and where imperfect data and loose phraseology so greatly prevail it is impossible to make any statement indisputably accurate or free from doubt. The Church of Belfast, however—the old Chapel of the Ford—is alone the object of inquiry here. It was in being in 1306, but its size and appearance in that or many after ages can never now be known. It probably long served but as an insignificant chapel in which the few wayfarers whose occasions brought them to this naked country offered up their hurried prayers when about to cross the currents of the Lagan water.<sup>1</sup> It was often broken down, repaired, and subject to all the casualties to which both castles and churches were exposed, but there is no account that it was ever diverted from its sacred use till seized for a period by rude Cromwellian hands and converted into a citadel, as related in a former part of this work. After this desecration, and on its restoration to the townspeople, it was again repaired, but not effectually, as by an Inquisition taken at Antrim 23rd October, 1657, by order of the Protectorate Government, to discover the state of the Irish churches, this report was made regarding the spiritual and temporal condition of that of Belfast—

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<sup>1</sup> The crossing of the Ford, and the dangers which sometimes attended it, are exemplified in the following letter from Sir Henry Sidney to the Lords of the Council 15th November, 1575 :—" In the Confinnes of this Countrie (the Ardes, as I take it) I was offered Skirmishe by *Mac Neill Brian Ertough* at my passage over the Water at *Belfast* ; which I caused to be answered and passed over without Losse of Man or Hourse ; yet by Reason of the Tydes extraordinarie Retorne our Horsies swamne and the Footemen in the Passage waded verye depe."—*Letters and Memorials of State, &c., written and collected by Sir Henry Sidney, &c.,* by Arthur Collins, vol. i., p. 76 (London, 1746).

It would appear from this that the Bridge which Sir Brian O'Neill contracted to make in 1568 had, probably, never been begun.

In 1640, in the Great Deed to remedy Defective Titles, the following words occur descriptive of part of the property possessed by Lord Chichester :—"The Ferry of Belfast," without any additional words, but proving that at the time both Ford and Ferry were in requisition, but no bridge as yet.

"Belfast als Shankill Anciently Impropriat to the Abby of Saule<sup>1</sup> and leased by Quine Elizabth to the Countesse of Kildare which Lease was purchased in by meanes of the latte Bpp of Derrey (John Bramhall) in the year 1634, and made over from the Crowne to the Lo. Vic. Cheechester, in lew of the Impropriat Tithes of Island Magee then belonging to the Lo. Vic. Cheechester. The Rectorial Tithes of the said Parrish of Belfast being now Improprate as aforesaid to the sd Lo. Cheechester consistinge of two Partes of the Greate Tythes, and in this Church is a Vicarage whereof the said Lo. Cheechester hath the Patronage, and thereunto belongeth the thirde parte of the Great Tithes and all the small Tythes,—and all the said Parrish consistes of Twenty Three Townes and is bounded by the Sea and the river Lagan on the East and Southward ; on the weast by Derrybolgie, and on the North with Coole Parrish ; it extends in lenght from the Church which is seated in the Towne of Belfast by the sea syde, southwarde three myles ; northwarde two myles and a halfe ; westward one myle and a halfe ; eastward the sea boundes it close by the Church yarde. The said Vicariall Tythes and Dutyes weare worth in the yeare 1640 Sixtie Poundes, and are now worth Fiftie Poundes. The said Church is not in good Repaire. The Commonwealth receaves the Profittes of the said Viccarage."<sup>2</sup>

The jurors, one of whom was Thomas Theaker of Belfast, append to their report of this church a recommendation—

"That the Church in the Towne of Belfast bee continued a Parrish Church where it is, and that the Three Townes of Ballycloughly, Ballyfinnoghly, and Dunmurry now of the Parrish of Drumbeg be added to the said Parrish of Belfast to all intents and purposes, and that in lew thereof the Townes of Ballycouston, Ballybought, and the halfe towne of Ballywinnett now of Belfast Parrish be hereafter separated from it in regard they lye above three myles distant from the church of Belfast."

The building, soon after the Restoration, was put in proper order, and in the map of 1685 it is shown as a large and respectable structure. It remained very much as it there appears for nearly a century after, and was the Parish Church of Belfast till

<sup>1</sup> It is differently expressed in the Roll of 1640 for remedying Defective Titles, being therein called "Senekill, alias Shankill, alias Albedevado, alias Belfast, parcel of the possessions of the late Monastery or Abbey of Downe."

<sup>2</sup> This Report was furnished by the Reverend Dean Reeves.

1774, when its insecure condition caused it to be taken down. All the rights and powers attached to it were legally transferred to St. Anne's in Donegall Street, which thenceforward became the Parish Church of the town. St. George's Church, on the site of the old edifice, was built in the present century. No one living has ever seen its predecessor; but many may remember the crumbling wall enclosing on the High Street side the ground in which it stood, the neglected graves, the broken tombstones, the accumulated rubbish, and also occasional interments within its consecrated precincts. The old wall projected some distance towards the street beyond the present front iron railing; the wooden entrance gate to the graveyard was at the side, really in Church Lane, and from it a view was obtained of all High Street up to the old Bank Buildings, though now so large a prospect is apparently obstructed by some high or projecting houses. The walls had many monuments, the largest of which was that of the Collier<sup>1</sup> family on the Church Lane side. It had a double row of columns and considerable inscriptions which were not legible, the soft stone of which the monument was constructed having crumbled away. The original graveyard must have been greatly larger than the present open space around St. George's Church, and it was the chief receptacle for long ages of the remains of most of the inhabitants of Belfast of every rank. For all this it would have needed large space, and in the map of 1685 the ground reached near or altogether to Ann Street.

The first Vicar who, after the Reformation, is known to have officiated in the church thus described was Robert Morley, referred to in the following terms in the visitation of Robert Echlin, Bishop of Down and Connor:—

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<sup>1</sup> It has been impossible to learn anything of this family. It never appears as a trading name in the town, but in the Revenue Papers of 1654 Collyer occurs as the name of one of the officials. Mount Collyer, now almost in the town, probably was built by a member of this family, but it and the large monument at St. George's Church—the latter forgotten but by a few—alone keep up the faint remembrance. Many great monuments must at one time have been in the old graveyard, of which that of the Pottinger family noticed elsewhere might be taken as an example.



"Ecclesia de Albavaddo als Belfast, built from the ground & repaired.	The great Tythes belong to the Countess of Kildare & by her farmed to the Lo. Treasurer.	The Vicarage rated in the King's Books at £5 per an.	Robert Morley Mr. of Arts Incumbent, Resident, and serveth the Cure.
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The next Vicar was Simon Chichester, probably from the name some connection of the family to whom the town as well as the church patronage belonged. He was admitted on 17th September, 1632, to the Vicarage of Belfast on the presentation of Faithful Fortescue, Charles Poyntz, and Tristram Beresford, trustees of the will of Lord Arthur Chichester, deceased. The Vicarage in the Regal Visitation 1633-4, and during Mr. Chichester's incumbency, is stated to have been worth £50 per annum; but he held with Belfast the living of Templepatrick, to which he was inducted at the same time. He was a Master of Arts, educated most probably at Oxford, but nothing is known of his permanency of residence or general proceedings while Vicar of Belfast. He is said to have lost his life in the rebellion of 1641, or to have died of the pestilence prevalent at the time. No confirmation of either statement has been obtained, though one or other may be perfectly accurate, as he was certainly not Vicar in 1642.

The next Vicar was Ludovicus Downes, who had the misfortune to hold the office, nominally, all through the civil wars. His appointment, and the time at which it took place, are proved by the "Triennial Visitation at Lisnegarvie 27th Aug., 1661." That visitation mentions his presentation and induction on the first of November, 1642.<sup>1</sup> Mr. Downes, it may with safety be inferred, was for a considerable part of his incumbency non-resident. That he was in Belfast, however, at its commencement cannot be doubted, as the bequests of the two cloaks by two several inhabitants of the town in 1643 afford sufficient

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<sup>1</sup> "Rector de Shankill als Belfast—Ludovicus Downes S.T.D.—rector comparuit. Presentat per Vicecountem Chichester 1<sup>o</sup> Nov. 1642. Institutus per Henricum Ep<sup>um</sup> Dunensem. Inductus per Robertum Leisly. Andreas Nesbit Curatus Comparuit. Mattheus Ferra, Clericus parochialis, comparuit." The above is the document proving the appointment of Ludovicus Downes in 1642.



proof. Other sources of information lead to the belief that he retired to Thornby in Northamptonshire, where his son Dive or Dives Downes, afterwards Bishop of Cork and Ross, was born.<sup>1</sup>

While Mr. Downes was in constrained absence from his charge, or unable to perform its duties with satisfaction to himself, the Government, either from motives of expediency, or—to give them due credit—from a desire to act justly, had chosen an Episcopalian clergyman—Mr. Essex Digby—to reside in the town, who must consequently not be omitted from the list of Vicars. From the relationship between him and the Chichester family, the more correct language should possibly be that the rulers for the time being had sanctioned or concurred in his appointment. He was the son of Sir Robert Digby; the Countess of Donegall (the Lady Mary Digby) was his aunt; and though Lodge states that “after the reduction of Ireland by the Parliament he was their established minister of Belfast,”<sup>2</sup> it is likely the wish of the family was not unthought of in this small appointment. Mr. Digby was of equally high descent on his mother's side, who was no other than the brave lady, Baroness of Offaley in her own right, so famous in Irish history for her defence of her Castle of Geashill when attacked by the rebels in 1642. Her son Essex had been introduced to the clerical profession in very juvenile days, having in 1630 been appointed to the Rectory of Geashill, “with a clause containing a faculty to hold the said promotion to holy orders notwithstanding the continuing his study, until such time as he shall come to riper years to take upon him the said orders.”<sup>3</sup> His bright prospects from clerical

<sup>1</sup> The following extract from the Senior Lecturer's Book in Trinity College is proof of this :—

1688	Pupillus	Parens	Ætas	ubi natus	ubi educatus	Tutor
Vigesimo Nono die Junii Eodem die	Divous Downes Pensionarius	filius Lodovici Downes Presbyteri	Natus annos sedecim	Natus Thornby in Comitatu Northamptonie	Educatus sub. Mag: Haslonie	Tho: Sheridan.

<sup>2</sup> Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. vi., p. 285.

<sup>3</sup> *Liber Hiberniæ*, vol. ii., p. 109.

and family station were soon obscured, and he was perhaps glad to accept the position of Episcopalian incumbent in Belfast under the usurpers. When occupying it he co-operated in schools, appointments of ministers, and general business with the men whose plain services and utterances could not have been in accordance with his own views. He was, like other ministers appointed or sanctioned by the Parliament, not permitted to use the service of the Church in full; at least, as this was the general practice, it may be so supposed. The Commissioners of Church Inquiry in 1657 conclude their Report on Belfast by stating "that Mr. Essex Digby is Incumbent there and in Sallary." That "Sallary" was £120 a-year, similar in amount with that which was bestowed on the Baptist minister in the town, who was the favoured of the ruling powers. Mr. Digby left Belfast about the time of the Restoration, and after passing through several intermediate steps died Bishop of Dromore in 1683.<sup>1</sup> Some unimportant notices of him are in the *Corporate Records* in connection with legal and monetary affairs of Lady Langford, in which he is called "Mr. Essex Digby, preacher of the word at Belfast."

Ludovicus Downes was in Belfast again, as clearly appears from the Visitation of 1661, but his sojourn must have been brief, as at the next triennial era (1664) the Vicarage was unrepresented.<sup>2</sup>

In 1666 Roger Jones was the incumbent of Belfast, but of him no direct particulars can be obtained. One of the daughters of Roger Jones, Viscount Ranelagh, was married to John Chichester, brother to the Earl of Donegall, and it may very reasonably be concluded that this Vicar was a family connection,

<sup>1</sup> It is curious that Essex Digby was Bishop of Dromore while his son, Simon Digby, also sat on the Episcopal Bench as Bishop of Limerick. Both appear to have occupied this high station from 1673 to 1683.—Correspondent of *Dublin Mail*, April, 1875.

<sup>2</sup> "Triennial Visitat<sup>n</sup> in Lisburn als Lisnegarvy 4 June 1664.

Belfast Dnus Donegall Impropr<sup>r</sup>.

Vicaria Vacat.

Mattheus Ferra Clericus—Vacat."

This seems to be rather an unfinished entry.

the John Chichester here mentioned having been father by Miss Jones of the second Earl of Donegall.<sup>1</sup> From the absence of all information regarding this Vicar, his occupation of the incumbency could not have been for any great length of time, and he was possibly an absentee during its continuance.

His successor, but at what precise date cannot be ascertained, was Claudius Gilbert, a name which, being surrounded by some peculiar circumstances, has occasioned considerable error in past times in the clerical roll of the Episcopalian ministers of Belfast. It may now, however, be distinctly received as a fact that Mr. Gilbert was originally a Nonconformist—most probably an Independent; that in February, 1659, the Commissioners of the Revenue were directed to provide “a House for him while preaching in Dublin;”<sup>2</sup> that his name appears in the Civil List of 1655, being resident at the time in Limerick, as the recipient of £200 a-year, the same amount which was given to each of several deprived Bishops, and much more than that which was bestowed on the greater number of other ministers; that he is the very first to sign an address to Henry Cromwell, the Lord Deputy, and to which there are eighteen other signatures, the tone of which is, of course, that of nonconformity; that he is appointed with others “to examine persons for the ministry,” and that his signature is attached, with that of Thomas Harrison, to a declaration which was issued by the appointment of the ministers assembled by authority in Dublin in May, 1658.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Gilbert most probably came to Belfast soon after the Restoration. His name, recording his admission *gratis* as a free commoner in 1669, is in the Corporate Book; but at what time his eyes were opened to the beauties and benefits of Episcopacy, and his connection with the Church commenced, has as yet not been entirely discovered. He was Vicar or minister of Shankill in

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<sup>1</sup> *Lodge's Peerage*, by Archdall, vol. i., p. 331.

<sup>2</sup> The entry of this amount of salary to the Bishops and to Gilbert will be found, copied from Cromwellian Papers, in Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, vol. ii., p. 481—Appendix.

<sup>3</sup> Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church*, vol. ii., p. 481, has this address.

1671, and in that capacity refused to pay his 20th parts.<sup>1</sup> If it could be imagined that his general talent and fame as a preacher had caused him to be invited to Belfast, and that in a modified form he could have been acting as Episcopal clergyman to the satisfaction of the people, some incongruities in his career might be explained. At no time does he seem to have been called, as if by authority, Vicar, or any title appropriate to the Episcopal clergy only. He published a treatise in Limerick, dedicated to Henry Cromwell, in which he styles himself "minister of the Gospel;" he is mentioned in the will of the first Earl of Donegall as "minister;" he is called "Theologian of Belfast" in the Registry of his son's entrance into Trinity College;<sup>2</sup> and, finally,

<sup>1</sup> This was in his official position, and as he was known to the authorities. The statement of his contumacy regarding the twentieths is communicated by W. M. Hennessy, from the returns in the Record Office, as has also been the following. It is the copy of "An Inquisition taken at Belfast, 25th October, 1676, regarding First Fruits and Ecclesiastical Revenues," at which the following Belfast men were jurors :—

James Kyrle, Tanner.  
John Johnston, Carpenter.  
Wm. Keron, Iron Worker.  
John Horner, Butcher.  
Wm. Neilson, "Epiphiasus."  
Gabriel Frankmorton, Yeoman.

David Morrisson, Yeoman.  
Hugo O'Quinn, Yeoman.  
Robert Skinner, Yeoman.  
Alexr. Michill, Yeoman.  
John Ross, Yeoman.  
John Millan, Yeoman.

Would any but Episcopalians be likely to be called to act on a jury for the purpose denoted? If so, it is a proof of the weight of Presbyterianism in 1676, as there were then merchants and persons of a different position in the town from those above named who should have been better qualified to adjudicate on ecclesiastical questions. It might almost be surmised that this Inquisition had some connection with Mr. Gilbert's reluctance, thinking possibly of his antecedents, to pay First Fruits and Twentieths. At any rate, the document preserves the names of a dozen inhabitants of the town of two centuries ago thought fit to act as jurors on points involving some information and acquirements, though in an inferior rank of life.

<sup>2</sup> This is the record of the entrance of Claudius Gilbert, the younger, from the old Senior Lecturer's Book—

1685 Dies men:	Pupillus	Pareus	Ætas	ubi natus	ubi educatus	Tutor
Die vicesimo tertio Martii.	Claudius Gilbert Pensio:	filius Claudii Gilbert Theologi de Bel- fast in Com Antrim	annos natus Sexdecim	natus Belfast in com prædicto	Educatus Belfast sub. mag <sup>o</sup> Gordan	Dives Downes.

For the above extract, and for the list of the writings of Claudius Gilbert the elder, which are in the library of Trinity College, the author is indebted to the Rev. Dr. Dickson, F.T.C.D.

in his own words in his will, as if the old leaven still clung to him, he calls himself simply "Minister of Belfast."<sup>1</sup> This accumulation of proof was perhaps unnecessary when Mr. Gilbert's published works can still be referred to;<sup>2</sup> but as his antecedents have been hitherto entirely unknown in the town, it appeared desirable to place them in their true light. At the same time, he undoubtedly stood in the position of Vicar or Episcopal minister of Belfast for many years, the allusion in his will to house-money, and his successor's connection with him as assistant, establishing the fact. He died, as nearly as can be learned, in 1696.

The obscurity hitherto attending Claudius Gilbert's history has much arisen from confounding him with his son, whose name was identical with his own—a second Claudius Gilbert. He, like his father, was also a man of ability, and acquired by his learning

<sup>1</sup> His will says—"I Claudius Gilbert minister of Belfast," followed by the usual words preceding the testamentary arrangements. "As for my temporall Goods which God of his bounty hath been pleased to affourd me I leave my son Claudius Gilbert my only child sole executor, with special charge to have a singular care of his mother my beloved wife Margaret Gilbert. . . . I leave to the poore of Belfast the summe of £20 which is due to me from the towne of Belfast for their House Money, it being for the yearly allowance agreed on at my first coming that became due to me from Michaelmas 1689 to the last Michaelmas 1690. I also charge my son Claudius to be very liberal to the poore as his discretion and abilities shall direct him. October 9th 1690."

It is a pity Mr. Gilbert had not been a little more explicit respecting the House Money, of which this is the earliest notice. The words almost imply that it was a voluntary tax by the people to increase the minister's income, and had been paid for a length of time. The sum after all was not very great, but perhaps Mr. Echlin sought in after years to increase it and fix it on the town as a legal subsidy.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Gilbert's published works, or rather, it is most likely, only a portion of them, were, first—

Dedicated to Lord Henry Cromwell, *The Libertine School'd*, or a Vindication of the Magistrate's Power in Religious Matters in answer to some Fallacious Queries scattered about the City of Limerick by a nameless author about 15 Dec. 1656. By Claudius Gilbert, B.D. and Minister of the Gospel at Limerick in Ireland. Printed at the Three Daggers in Fleet St. Lond. 1657.

A Tract called *The Blessed Peacemaker*, &c.

*A Sovereign Antidote against Sinful Errors*, 4<sup>o</sup> Lond. 1658.

*A Pleasant Walk to Heaven*.

A Translation from the French of Pierre Jurieu of *A Preservative against the Change of Religion*, by C. Gilbert.



high office in Trinity College, Dublin.<sup>1</sup> His bust is in the library, and he bequeathed to the college his entire fortune, consisting of about £14,000. Though a native of Belfast, his connection with it ceased in early life, but his name is still kept fresh and living by the inscription on the large and beautiful communion flagon in St. Anne's Church, which he presented or bequeathed to that congregation in 1743.<sup>2</sup> It is hoped this clearing up of the history of Claudius Gilbert will be satisfactory to those who have heard his name, and that always in a faulty account.

Mr. Gilbert's successor in the Vicarage of Belfast was either John Winder or James Echlin. The only evidence which has been procured that the former was ever Vicar of Belfast is in the introduction of his name in that relation in a list of Vicars procured from a learned investigator into the subject of Irish ecclesiastical history, and in which "Winder Clk." occurs between Simon Chichester and Dr. Tisdall, and therefore not in chronological sequence, and without date or Christian name or any explanatory words. The other point of evidence comes from Mr. Sacheverell, the traveller who visited Belfast in 1698, and who says—"Mr. Winder the *Minister* of *Belfast* and Chancellor of the Diocese is an excellent Preacher as most I have heard." Whether these two inconclusive notices constitute a just claim on Mr. Winder's part to be placed among the Vicars of Belfast is extremely doubtful. There is a bare possibility that

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Gilbert was Fellow of Trinity College in 1693, and afterwards Regius Professor of Divinity and Vice-Provost. He was rector of Ardstraw in 1735, as appears by the College Calendar of that year, but his name is not in Dr. Fitzgerald's list (W. Shaw Mason's *Parochial Survey of Ireland*, vol. i., p. 134) of the rectors of that parish, arising probably from the fact that as Senior Fellow he was non-resident at Ardstraw.

<sup>2</sup> The inscription on the communion flagon in St. Anne's Church is—

"Ex Donis Revdi  
Dom. Claudii Gilbert  
Theol Profesi in Coll:  
Dubl: Ecclesiae Paroch.  
De Belfast ubi Natus  
Erat A.D. 1670."



he may have been so for a short time between Mr. Gilbert and Mr. Echlin. If so, it must have been very short indeed—unless Gilbert's death took place sooner than 1696—as Swift, whom Winder succeeded in Kilroot, and with whom he continued long after on intimate terms, having received friendship and benefits from the Dean, addresses to him a letter from Moor Park, dated 13th January, 1698, saying—"I desire my humble services to Mrs. Windar, and that you will let her know I shall pay a visit at Carnmoney some day or other." Winder was rector of Carnmoney at the time, and the statement of a stranger like Sacheverell that he was minister of Belfast does not prove it, for, being so near the town and well-known in it, he may have frequently officiated here, particularly at this period when the succession to the Vicarage was possibly unsettled. A strict search through the Records of First Fruits and Twentieth Parts, and also through the Bishop's Returns of Collations and Institutions, has failed to discover John Winder as Vicar of Shankill or Belfast.<sup>1</sup>

There was some sad confusion, and worse, in ecclesiastical matters in Belfast at this period, if the following words be an unadorned description of feeling and action among the inhabitants. It is an extract from a letter addressed by the Bishop of Derry to the Bishop of Down and Connor, dated 31st May, 1698:—

"I understand that the people of Belfast are very refractory, and do many irregular things. That they will not consent to enlarge their church that there should be room for all their people: that they bury in spite of the law in the church without prayers and come in with their hats on: that they break the seats and refuse to deliver their collections for briefs according to the order of Council to the churchwardens. I think it is advisable to observe as many of these insolent passages as you can; put them into affidavits duly sworn and send them up here to me or Sir John Coghill and we will see what can be done for you."

What Vicar officiated in 1698 to so unruly a party as this is not, perhaps, of very serious importance, or whether the congre-

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<sup>1</sup> This search was made by W. M. Hennessy, Esq., Record Office, Dublin.

gation, if Presbyterians, or partly such, were goaded to this unseemly line of conduct by acts of persecution, party strife, or intolerance, would now be unnecessary to inquire. It may have been some sudden or temporary outbreak, but, taken in any light, it is a very strange view of the conduct of the worshippers in the church, whether usual or occasional.<sup>1</sup>

Amidst this confusion it is to be feared James Echlin must, for the present at least, be taken as the successor of Mr. Gilbert to the Vicarage of Belfast. The exact time of his induction, as in so many other instances, is uncertain ; he was in the office at the beginning of the century, and his relations with the church and with the town were rather peculiar, not altogether so marked as those which the preceding letter expresses, but still sufficient to show a state of turmoil in ecclesiastical affairs, as will be disclosed by the following original papers :—

“The humble Petition of James Echlin Clk, Mr of Arts, and Chaplain to the Rt Hon Francis Earl of Longford,

“Humbly Sheweth, —

“That before the breaking out of these late troubles in this Kingdom yr Petitr was settled and enjoyed several Liveings in the Diocess of Killala and province of Connaught, to at least the Value of Six Score Pounds per annum. That in the troublesome times the Petitr with his family was forced from the said Liveings by the Cruelties and oppressions of the Irish army, and fled into England, where he lived till the English army came over into this Kingdom in wch army he served as Chaplain for some time, untill of late he received some encouragement to go to Belfast, where the Vicarages of Coole, als Carmonie, Ballylinny, Ballymartin, and Ballywalter in the diocess of Connor, lately falling void by the death of the late Incumbent thereof, and in the gift and dispose of the Rt Hon. the Earl and Countess of Longford, their Ldship and Ladyship are ready to present yr petitioner to the same as an encouraget to him to reside and stay amongst them which is of far less value than what he formerly enjoyed in Connaught which he absolutely quitts, and in regard the liveings to wch the Petitr is now to be presented consist of severall denominas yet lye within the compasse of 3 miles or there-

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<sup>1</sup> The above letter is in Mant's *History of the Church of Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 97.

abouts and were all enjoyed by the late incumbent thereof, and that yr Petitr behaved himselfe well in his function when he was beneficed in the diocess of Killala, and hath since his being at Belfast brought over several of the Nonconformists to the communion of the Church of England as may appear to your Grace by the annexed Certificates of the Earl of Longford and Bishop of Clogher formerly Bp of Killala. And yr Petitr &c.”<sup>1</sup>

The preceding petition was addressed to Primate Boyle to grant to Echlin a faculty for holding a plurality, and was complied with. The Countess of Longford mentioned in it was Ann, one of the two daughters of the first Earl of Donegall. She had married the Earl of Longford, and they had then, as trustees for the estate, the presentation to the family livings. The petition to the Primate encloses this certificate from the Earl of Longford, farther explanatory of Mr. Echlin's ecclesiastical connection with Belfast—

“These are to certify all persons whom it shall or may concern that Mr. James Echlin Clk. hath lately assisted Mr. Gilbert in the discharge of the Cure of Belfast, and that dureing the small time he hath been there he hath behaved himself to the great satisfaction of the people of that place, and hath brought over to the Communion of the Church of England several persons from the Presbyterian meeting, & is a person of good life and behaviour, and as such deserves all possible encouragement.

“Given under my hand this 24th day of Nov. 1691.

“LONGFORD.”

The next document written by Mr. Echlin, when Vicar, is of quite a different description. It has been extracted from the voluminous bundles which compose the Civil and Miscellaneous Correspondence in the Record Office.

“Letter from the Revd James Echlin to Joshua Dawson.

“Belfast, March 8, 1702.

“SIR,

“I dare not owne the obligations I lie under to you because I find you are not fond of such acknowledgements, but I hope

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<sup>1</sup> For this petition the author is indebted to the Rev. William Reeves, D.D., Dean of Armagh.

you will give me leave to have a gratefull sense of them and to blesse both God and you for them. Our towne have it amongst them that immediately upon your comeing to Towne (Dublin) the Lords Justices signed the order for the Commission wch it would soon tell them they had some hopes of preventing or at least delaying. But now as gon so far and they find their cause desperat they bellow out against me the most terrible threats imaginable, tho' I thank God for it I am not sensible of any advantage they can take of me or any hole they can find in my coat, if not in being severe upon me for any thinge that I owe amongst them; for, being in their Debt, as I have been used these seven yeares past—I could not avoid it; and the present scarcity of mony will not allow me to get quietly out of it, so that I am truly affraid they may clap some arest on me and prevent me proceeding in my business. I know (word illegible) to prevent paying one's debts is very disreputable, especially in one of my profession, but in my case, all circumstances considered, it may be the better construed. Pray, Good Sir, let me begg of you, without you think the Government will please to grant such a prohibition for 2 or 3 months, to be instrumental in procuring it for me; or if you think it a thing impracticable or not advisable, to keep what I have writt to yr self. I have not acquainted any soule living on it, not my good Ld Bp of Down one of the best friends I have in the world. I really blush at this letter and hope a favourable construction of it.

“JA. ECHLIN.”

The inhabitants of the town, or at least a portion of them, and the Vicar, were not, from this letter, on the most amicable terms. The allusion in it refers to the House-money question then agitating Belfast; and the apprehension of Mr. Echlin that the townspeople would put “gyves upon his wrists,” ostensibly for his little grocery debts, but really for his endeavours to enforce what he deemed his just rights, was surely imaginary. He was, however, in difficulties, and his general usefulness must have been greatly marred by these dissensions. He lived in Mill Street in 1700, as is stated in a lease of that time. Appointed to Carnmoney and the small parishes adjacent in 1691, he may possibly have exchanged afterwards with Mr. Winder for Belfast, where he had laboured for a while as Mr. Gilbert's coadjutor. If there be any truth in this surmise, it would have been better for his comfort had he remained in the quiet country, among the

rural scenes of Carnmoney and Ballylinny, than have again come in contact with the sturdy Presbyterians of Belfast, though it is denied by Dr. Kirkpatrick that the main point of opposition to him was founded on party spirit.<sup>1</sup>

It has been mentioned that Mr. Echlin died in 1709 and that his successor, Dr. Tisdall, was appointed in 1716; but the latter paid First Fruits for Shankill in 1712, which is more probably the true year. Dr. William Tisdall, from his talent and associations, was the most eminent person who held the office of Vicar of Belfast in old times. Dr. Reid, before whom his name came prominently forward, asks, as if in doubt, whether this Belfast Vicar and Dr. Tisdall, Jonathan Swift's "rival," were one and the same person. There is no doubt about it whatever; they were identical; and Dr. Tisdall's history—social, clerical, and scholastic—is well known to the literary inquirers of the period. He was Vicar here for about twenty years, and probably for all the time was as much estranged from the majority of the inhabitants of Belfast as Mr. Echlin, his predecessor. Not the great Dean himself had more animosity to Presbyterianism than Dr. Tisdall; he wrote many tracts against it, one of which, or a portion of it, is so distinguished for strength of language as to have been attributed to Swift—an opinion which appears to have been entertained even by the Dean's eminent biographer;<sup>2</sup> and the refutation of another tract—"The Conduct of the Dissenters in Ireland"—occupies a great proportion of *Presbyterian Loyalty*. It may indeed be said that ponderous work was altogether written in refutation of the views adverse to Presbyterianism given to the public by the Vicar of Belfast. He was the champion and advocate of political disabilities for religious opinions. Several of his works were written before he became Vicar of Belfast, and may have been partly the motive for his appointment. His reputation as a pulpit orator was great. Swift, in one of his letters, exhorts him to preach, repeating the word no less than six times to render his advice more emphatic,

<sup>1</sup> *Presbyterian Loyalty*, p. 485.

<sup>2</sup> Sir Walter Scott's edition of Swift's Works, vol. ix., p. 71.



and adding, "for that is certainly your talent." He probably, therefore, opposed Nonconformity with as much vigour from the pulpits of Belfast<sup>1</sup> and Portadown—of both which places he was incumbent—as from the press. He continued the action for House-money against the inhabitants of this town, but in his time it ended adversely to the Church, as it was decided such a claim was inapplicable to a Corporation like Belfast.

The events of Dr. Tisdall's life are to many more attractive than his theological writings. He was the intimate friend of Swift, and proposed marriage to Stella, the Dean being considered her guardian, and towards whom he himself was thought to have had similar intentions; but the relations and history of Swift in connection with Stella are too well known to require notice here, even if allied to our subject. It was formerly said that Dr. Tisdall's proposal caused him much annoyance and embarrassment, and produced an estrangement between the two friends. In the most recent work published regarding Swift this assertion is very much set aside, and he is made by the very distinguished author<sup>2</sup> to rid himself both of rivalry and embarrassment in the

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tisdall's tutor was Dives Downes, son of one of our former Vicars. Tisdall became a Fellow of Trinity College in 1696, after going through all the usual intermediate stages. He was D.D. in 1707, and may really not have been so much in the north of Ireland as his duties would have required, the Dublin atmosphere being more congenial to his tastes and habits. Many of his works are in Trinity College Library, and also in the Halliday Collection in the Royal Irish Academy. Those which excited most notice were—*A Sample of True Blue Presbyterian Loyalty*, Dublin, 4o, 1709—this is ironical; *The Conduct of the Dissenters in Ireland*, Dublin, 8vo, 1712; *A Seasonable Inquiry into that most dangerous political Principle, &c.*, 8vo, 1713; *The Case of the Sacramental Test stated and urged, particularly with relation to the Presbyterians of Ireland*, 8vo, 1715. The copy of this in the Halliday Collection contains 56 pages. A reply to it is still longer.

Dr. Tisdall's will is dated 1732. He leaves all his property in trust to two clergymen for the benefit of his wife and children, desiring them to pay to the former "all the rent of my house in Carrickfergus and from the leases which I hold under the family of Donegall." It is quite uninteresting, making no reference to the events of his life.

<sup>2</sup> See the long letter regarding this in Forster's *Life of Swift* (pp. 137–38), and in which some explanations are made favourable to the Dean's character; and for several interesting particulars of the connection between Swift and Tisdall see pp. 134–140.



matter. Still there are some unexplained circumstances, but the event was not followed by the personal animosity to the Vicar sometimes said to have resulted from it. There are even several letters from Swift to Tisdall in Scott's life of the Dean<sup>1</sup> containing many political scraps and lively allusions, proving that their friendship was not extinguished; though, as Scott alleges, the letters to Stella have occasional remarks rather disrespectful of the future Vicar of Belfast. Dr. Tisdall died in 1735, and no tradition or any account that can be heard of, except the notices in *Presbyterian Loyalty*, remains of his conduct or actions in the town.

The Rev. Richard Stewart succeeded Dr. Tisdall in 1736. Nothing is known of his talents or his relations with the people of the town, but his course was not interfered with by any of those disturbances which marked the Vicariates of his two immediate predecessors. He died in 1747, and was succeeded by the Rev. James Saurin in the same year.

Mr. Saurin was member of a distinguished Huguenot family, and was Vicar of Belfast for twenty-six years. Two of his sons rose to distinction. One of them was Attorney-General for Ireland and an eminent member of Parliament; another became Bishop of Dromore. The statement has been made that, when St. George's Church was being built, the workmen engaged in making the foundation so respected Mr. Saurin's grave that they

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<sup>1</sup> *Swift's Life*, by Sir Walter Scott, vol. xv., p. 280.

Tisdall did not appear to much advantage in what he writes of the Islandmagee Witches. The story of the Islandmagee Witches was printed in Belfast in 1822. At the end of it is a letter from William Tisdall, dated Belfast, 4th April, 1711; and if appointed to the Vicarage in 1712, it is not easy to explain how he came to write from Belfast in 1711. It is, however, a most weak production. He says he cannot see why a *real witch* may not have permission to personate a *real saint* as well as the devil has been permitted to personate an angel of light, or why a person in *contract* with the devil may not be guilty of this worst hypocrisy which gives her apostacy a deeper dye—alluding to Judge Upton's opinion that real witches in compact with the devil could hardly have been such regular attenders on public worship. Tisdall, though so distinguished in scholarship and preaching, appears to have sided entirely with the judges, and argues on the belief of the existence of witches, their power and practices, with as much apparent faith as on any generally acknowledged theological question.

arched it over, and that, either accidentally or by removal, his remains now lie under the communion table in that church. This account is corroborated by Archdeacon Saurin, who states that in 1820 he made inquiry about it from his grandfather's parish clerk, still living in that year, who declared that it was perfectly correct. Mr. Saurin, during his incumbency in Belfast, was universally respected, and the newspaper obituary at his death in 1772 contains a warm eulogium on his estimable character and Christian demeanour. He married Mrs. Duff, the widow, it is presumed, of John Duff, who had been four times Sovereign of Belfast, and who died in office in the year 1753.<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. William Bristow became Vicar in 1772. His incumbency reached into the present century. It is stated that he preached the last sermon in the venerable church in High Street, and the first in the new one in Donegall Street. Mr. Bristow died in the year 1808, and there are some still

<sup>1</sup> A difficulty arises again with respect to the name of Winder. In Cotton's *Fasti*, vol. v., p. 246, it is said—"John Winder Preby of Kilroot . . . came to Ireland as one of King William's chaplains. He died in 17—, leaving the Revd Peter Winder of Bangor, and the Revd Edward Winder, Vicar of Belfast, who died in 1770." This must be erroneous, so far as it relates to the Vicar of Belfast, if it mean that Edward Winder died while holding that office. Mr. Saurin was Vicar at the time, and had been so since 1747. A Winder was in or near the town in 1717, as by the will of Robert Havon of that year he was left guardian of the four children of the said Havon, and was to receive the very small remuneration of £35 for "their schooling, dyat, cloathing, and lodging." Though this Winder is called *clericus* in the will, it is scarcely possible he could have been the rector of Carnmoney. He may have been son of the former incumbent, the friend of Swift; the name Edward is not in the will at all. It is a perplexing story, and in the confusion concerning it application was made to Dr. Dickson, F.T.C., for information, who sent the following entry, which by no means clears up the Winder history in its connection with Belfast.

1698	Pupillus	Parens	Ætas	Ubi natus	Ubi educatus	Tutor
Die Apr: 14	Joh: Winder	Fi: Edw: Winder generosi	annes natus 19	nat: in Comitatu Roscom:	Edu: sub Olivero Jones Elph:	Claudius Gilbert
1713 Novembris 9 <sup>o</sup>	Edwardus Winder	filius Johannis gen:	aun: ageus 16	natus Coole in Com. Antrim	Educatus Lisburne sub Mo Clarke	Dr. Gilbert

There would thus appear to have been two families of the name of Winder connected with the town, or neighbourhood rather, Coole or Carnmoney having

living who have seen him. He was the first clerical Sovereign of Belfast, to which office he was appointed no less than ten times. Mr. Bristow was a highly important and influential person in Belfast for many years, and in right of his magisterial authority was largely concerned in all measures for the preservation of the peace and public order during the disturbed times at the end of the last century. His co-operation and intimate connection with those not of his communion in all benevolent and useful works for the advantage of the town, so far as newspaper records can establish the fact, are creditable to him, and indicate good sense and uprightness.

This is the conclusion of the history of the early Vicars of Belfast. There is a possibility that further research may yet enlarge the number, as in some instances more considerable intervals occur between successions than was usual, or could have been advantageous for the government of the church. It may be, however, that all the old Vicars of Belfast till the end of the eighteenth century are here named, some too briefly, as both the personal and vicarial history of several of them could have been very much more enlarged.

The present size of Belfast is by no means more distinctly proved than by the increased number of its churches. Thus the old Chapel of the Ford—the edifice which throughout the seventeenth and most of the eighteenth centuries was sufficient for the requirements of the people—has now expanded in the town

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been the native place of one of the juniors ; and it is a singular fact, offering a sort of corroboration of the position of the Rev. Edward Winder, that in the will of Daniel Mussender, made in 1763, is this passage—"I leave to Ann Winder and Jane Winder daughters of the Reverend Edward Winder £50 each." This makes no reference to his being, or having ever been, Vicar of Belfast. How or when he could have been such is inexplicable, but his connection with the town in a clerical capacity from these words in the will is made probable at the least. The College Register would agree in representing him as identical with the Edward Winder, the son of John, who entered in 1713 at the age of sixteen, but nothing proves that he was Vicar of Belfast except the broad statement in Cotton's *Eusti*. If he had been so, his name would certainly have been found in the imperfect church registers which remain, or some allusion in them to prove the fact. His history is still more complicated when the term *generosi* is applied to his father.

and suburbs to no less a number than twenty-two churches, and the Episcopalians, as appears by the population return of 1871, to 46,423 persons.

It remains to be added that the Parish Registries, now in St. Anne's Church,<sup>1</sup> have been very badly preserved. They began, it is highly probable, with the first establishment of the Corporation, or nearly so. Any of ancient date would be most precious, but they are now, it is to be feared, irrecoverably lost. A portion of one on parchment was seen by the author very many years ago, and the existence of a Parish Register in 1659 is proved by an entry in that year in the *Town Records* alluding to the death of John Asshe. The registries in the church contain much worth the attention of those seeking information on the modern history of families in the town. The oldest book begins in the year 1745 and ends in 1784. It is entirely destitute of any peculiar notices that might have been expected and desired, in addition to the numerous columns of marriages, baptisms, and deaths in brief detail. Among these will be found names now little known in the town, or altogether extinct. There are several of the name of Leathes, some of Macartney, Mussenden, Bateson, Halliday, Banks, Pottinger, Peacock, Radcliff, Garnett, and others. The names of the two clergymen who were Vicars of the parish while this book was being filled—Mr. Saurin and Mr. Bristow—are sometimes mentioned, but the curates more frequently perform professional duties. The subsequent books are equally uninteresting, but, being authentic documents, they will, it is hoped, be preserved with scrupulous care. The two handsome pieces of silver plate in the church have already been described, and the only other article to be noticed is a large pewter dish, not less than a foot in diameter, on the rim of which is cut—"The Collection Dish for the Church of Belfast. Mr. Jas. Bashford Churchwarder 1769;" the intro-

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<sup>1</sup> This church was first called St. Mary's, or intended to have been so, and the name St. Anne's is popularly stated to have been adopted in honour of Anne, eldest daughter of the Duke of Hamilton, who was the first wife of the Earl of Donegall, who built the church entirely at his own expense.

duction of which in this place only proves how very, very poor we are in ecclesiastical relics.

The Vicarage of Belfast, as is manifest from the preceding account, was presented to by the Chichester family. After passing through some mutations which it is unnecessary to mention, the final grant which made their right to it secure is related in these words—"The Rectory and Advowson of the Vicarage of Senekill, als Shankhill alias Albedevado alias Belfast were granted to Edwd Viscount Chichester and Arthur his son 22 September 1640." This is in the deed of that year for remedying defective titles. All this has been again changed. The old system has ceased, and new ecclesiastical relations have become the law of Ireland.

#### THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF BELFAST.

Presbyterianism in Ireland is destitute of that charm of antiquity which surrounds the Episcopal form of Church government. But as Belfast is at this day, and has long been, its supreme centre and capital in this country—as to the industry and perseverance of the people of that faith, this town, and the entire province of Ulster, are indebted for so much of their wealth and prosperity—the space to be here devoted to its ecclesiastical annals might naturally be of rather extended character. But the history of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, embracing Belfast, ecclesiastically considered, has been in recent years so fully and ably treated, that no necessity remains for the introduction of much beyond strictly local and original details, and with which a work on the general subject could not satisfactorily deal.

It may be mentioned, as a rather unexplained circumstance, that while struggling Presbyterian congregations were formed in country places in Antrim and Down at very early periods—as in Broadisland, for instance, in 1610, and elsewhere in years soon succeeding—no notice whatever can be procured of such in Belfast till the Civil Wars, when the Scottish element which then prevailed changed the face of society. Could this have



arisen from Belfast having been at its outset so much an English town that there were really few or no Presbyterians among its small number of inhabitants, and that the principal influence was bent in a contrary direction? Be that as it may, the absence of any settlement, or house, or congregation in the town at the earliest appearance of Presbyterianism in Ireland must be received as true. As in the case of the Episcopal Church, however, what little information has been obtained of the structures for Presbyterian worship and consequent congregations, preliminary to a historical account of the early ministers, must first be introduced.

The late Dr. Bruce devoted some attention to this inquiry, and states that the earliest meeting-house was in North Street, near the North Gate,<sup>1</sup> but no documentary evidence is given in proof,—it is a tradition only. Another account is, that the first building for Presbyterian worship was in Hercules Street. Both statements may point to the same spot, as the two streets named almost unite together very near the place at which the North Gate once stood, but neither of them mentions the time when such edifice was used for worship, a precision of proof not derivable from tradition. If extrinsic evidence can be of any service in establishing the point, it may be stated that on the map of 1685 a building is represented in this locality which, from its size and the absence of a chimney, might have been intended for some public use. The statement may therefore be true; and old officials and others who dislike to relinquish long-cherished opinions are still in the habit of asserting that the first cradle of Belfast Presbyterianism was in North Street. Some of the old race of Belfast, however, would, it may be supposed—at least the supposition may be made—prefer considering Rosemary Street, with all its time-honoured associations, as that where the “Meeting Place” first found a home in this town. That it was

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<sup>1</sup> This was in the *Christian Moderator*; but the subject has been taken up by the Rev. John Scott Porter, who, in the *Bible Christian* for 1836 (second series), has popularised the history of early Presbyterianism in Belfast, together with the lives of Dr. Bruce's predecessors and his own in the old congregation, in a very lucid and excellent manner.



in it, or near it—which even a reliance to some extent on tradition would scarcely set aside, as all the sites mentioned are not very remote from one another—cannot well be questioned. The ground in Rosemary Street in which the meeting-houses of the First and Second Congregations stand, it must, on the other hand, be stated, was only obtained so lately as the end of the seventeenth century, during the ministry of the Rev. John McBride.<sup>1</sup> But this may have been only the era of perpetuity possession, not its initiation for religious purposes. Laying aside, however, all conjecture, it is to be received as an established truth that in Rosemary Street the Presbyterianism of Belfast was nurtured, and that the earliest known foundation in the town indisputably connected with it is that of the First Congregation in that street. By an account popularly believed, this, the first erection in which all the Presbyterians of Belfast originally worshipped, was in 1717 on the site of a former one, the date of the erection of which, its size or appearance, whether thatched or tiled, the state of the ground around it, or any other particulars, are lost in the darkness of the past. The existence only of such a house cannot reasonably be doubted. On the margin of the old lease of 1717 there is a rude sketch of the building, which was erected or stood in the place in that year, being the second which the town certainly contained. It has the usual barn-like appearance, with outside steps to the galleries—one of the tasteless fabrics always raised by Presbyterians down to modern days. It was replaced by the present structure in 1783. The Second Congregation separated from the First in 1708, the want of room obliging as many as 120 families to secede. They built for themselves in the same enclosure another house of the old architectural type, which was taken down in 1790, and the commodious building which now appears erected on its site.

The original Meeting-house of Belfast having thus thrown off one hive, in the year 1721 another departure from it took place, but on this occasion on doctrinal points and questions of church

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<sup>1</sup> *Bible Christian* for April, 1836, p. 112.

policy; and being reluctant, perhaps, to wander too far from the old ancestral home, they settled down but a few perches distant from it, building the house long known as the Third Presbyterian Congregation, and which remained till the year 1831, when it was replaced by the present solid edifice. The meeting-house in Donegall Street is the only other which can be added as belonging in the last century to the Presbyterian body in Belfast. It was built in 1794.

A few further facts worth recording in connection with the buildings of the three old Presbyterian meeting-houses of the town are, that the First House was erected in 1783 at a cost of £2300, of which sum the Bishop of Derry contributed £56 17s. 6d., and the Earl of Donegall 100 guineas. It is true the Bishop was eccentric,—still he was a member of the Episcopal Bench, and his eccentricity on this occasion took a right direction. With the gift he forwarded a most kind and courteous letter, which is still to be seen in one of the congregational books, expressing his admiration of the architectural elegance of the building, as many others have since done.<sup>1</sup> The erection of the Second House in 1790 was not attended with any striking circumstances. Many inhabitants of the present generation have seen the building which was the Meeting-house of the Third Congregation, also in Rosemary Street, and having impressed on its unadorned and well-remembered front the date, 1722. At the time of its

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<sup>1</sup> The precise particulars of the expense of the present meeting-house of the First Congregation, as recorded in their books, are as underneath:—

"Materials of the Old House sold for	...	...	£217	0	5½
Subscriptions from Members of the Old House			960	11	1½
New Members	...	...	68	16	4½
Strangers	...	...	714	3	8
The Ladies of Belfast for a Pulpit	...	...	39	4	10½
Borrowed from the Rev. James Crombie	...	...	300	0	0
Balance received from Mr. Robert Gordon	...	...	12	5	7½

Paid Roger Mulholland for building the House

with all materials ... .. £2160 2 9

The balance was applied to extras."

The sum received for the materials of the old meeting-house of 1717 prove it to have been a tolerably substantial structure.

demolition this was the oldest building for Presbyterian worship then standing in the town. From a Book still preserved by the congregation, many particulars of its erection, and also of the beginning and early history of this now large and important worshipping society, may be obtained. It is, however, almost entirely the account of the expenditure on building, with some collateral observations. The house was in progress of erection in 1721-2-3, and about £1300 apparently were expended on it. Not alone in Belfast and the neighbouring towns were contributions gathered, but Scotland also was so liberal, that several seats were set apart for Scotch sailors and others of that country in remembrance of the gifts received from it. The contributions to the building fund and other particulars are most numerous, and such entries as the following occur:—“22 January 1721. To Cash to John M'Mun for the ground £80; to Hugh Blackwood for to hyre a Hors and Expences to Dublin £1 10s. 0d.; Cash for Timber in Dublin £73 14s. 9½d.; 'Freight' of the above Timber £10 11s. 8d.” The timber trade in Belfast in 1721 was on a retail scale; some little was bought from Isaac Macartney and a few other dealers, but the bulk came from Dublin. This book contains a mass of valuable information—such as the names of those who formed the original members of the congregation, the prices of the seats in the church, and other details of early local Presbyterian history. It was called from the first “The New Erection,” which name it retained till the end of the last century. This is the oldest book in the possession of any of the three bodies. The earliest of the First Congregation only dates from 1781, and that of the Second from 1791—both being, of course, destitute of any real interest. There ought to be books or records somewhere belonging to the two early congregations of more ancient date than any of these, but the little desire which the Presbyterians of Belfast have manifested to know their early history has probably caused them to be lost or hidden away in some neglected corner.

Such is a brief account of the certain recognised buildings for

Presbyterian worship in the eighteenth century in Belfast; but the lives of the men who ministered within them constitute the true history of that church. Many of them were persons of talent and energy, the leaders and guides of their brethren as well in spiritual matters as in persecution and temporal troubles. Though a few congregations were established in the neighbourhood of Belfast in the beginning of the seventeenth century, it does not appear, as already stated, that any fixed pastor got footing in the town in the first days of the Scotch ministers. The infant town was no doubt frequently visited by them, not discountenanced, it is probable, by Sir Arthur Chichester, who, though obliged by his office to promote uniformity, was personally of puritanical tendencies. The early Scotch ministers were in a sense barely Presbyterians. They were regularly ordained deacons and priests by the Bishops, and received the tithes for their support; and though it was a hollow union, perhaps deceptive on both sides, the evidence of such ceremonies having been gone through in rural parishes in the neighbourhood of Belfast is not to be doubted.<sup>1</sup> One, as well acquainted with early Presbyterian history, perhaps, as any other person in Ireland, argues from these facts in this manner on the first status of the Scotch ministers in this country:—

“The very circumstance of the alleged founders of the Irish Presbyterian Church having been allowed to occupy the churches and to enjoy the tithes of their respective Irish parishes might be cited as a proof that they could not have been Presbyterians at all. Into their Irish parishes they must have been (as we know they were) episcopally inducted, and from these Irish parishes they must have been (as we

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<sup>1</sup> The proof of this will be found in the Royal Visitation Books of Down and Connor for 1633, deposited in the Court of Prerogative in Dublin, and in which John Ridge, Robert Cunningham, and Robert Brice are admitted deacons to their respective parishes by Robert, Bishop of Down and Connor; as also Robert Blair; and in 1629 Calvert, by Andrew, Bishop of Raphoe. This, it is true, is the bare chronicle, without addition or explanation, but contemporary evidence notwithstanding, and is taken from a newspaper controversy on the subject, the books in the Prerogative Court not having been personally examined. Belfast coming very early in the Civil Wars to be a garrison town was in a different position from the country parishes.

know they were) episcopally expelled. They were, therefore, while occupying these churches and receiving the tithes of these parishes, professedly, and in the eye of the law, Episcopal ministers."<sup>1</sup>

No ordination like that referred to in the above passage took place in this town, and it is singular that some of the very men so admitted were immediately after in conflict with their ecclesiastical superiors on questions of church polity, and that the first notice of genuine Presbyterianism which is found in connection with Belfast is in the controversy which took place here between the two churches in August, 1636. This controversy does not seem to enter extensively into the main points of difference between the churches. On the one side, however, was Bishop Leslie, with several coadjutors; on the other, "Mr. Robert Cunningham and other Scots ministers." This meeting was in the Church of Belfast, and at it were present many eminent persons.<sup>2</sup> Simon Chichester was the Vicar, but his voice was not heard. Like most other religious controversies, it produced no change of opinion on either side, but resulted in the silencing of the Scotch ministers, who, for the remainder of Strafford's rule, could only exercise their office in this town and elsewhere in private houses as lecturers, in a half-concealed manner.

At the beginning of the rebellion of 1641 the Scottish ministers suffered less from the Irish enemy than those of the more regular Episcopal faith; and when, in a few months after its commencement, the army under Monro arrived, it was accompanied by several chaplains, who first brought their church in Ireland into Presbyterian form. In 1642, however, Belfast had as yet no fixed minister. The newly constituted Presbytery "appointed Mr. Baird to preach every third Sabbath in Belfast, there being the third part of a regiment under his charge quartered there."<sup>3</sup> From the infrequency of Mr. Baird's visits to the town this could afford but a very inadequate

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<sup>1</sup> Extract from a communication of the Rev. Classen Porter, of Larne.

<sup>2</sup> The particulars of this controversy will be found in Dr. Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. i., p. 499.

<sup>3</sup> Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. i. p. 373.



measure of spiritual instruction to the Scottish soldiers, and it would be satisfactory to know how the other two-thirds of this particular regiment were attended to, unless it be taken as a proof of the incorporation of Colonel Chichester's soldiers and those of the other British commanders with their Scottish allies. Nor is it likely Mr. Baird had the entire charge of the instruction of his countrymen in Belfast, but that he was often assisted by other ministers during the continuance of General Monro's army in the town. There is a notice (*ante*, p. 110) in the examination of Theaker, the Sovereign, that a Presbytery of twenty elders and four deacons was in Belfast in 1644, and that they had silenced Mr. Brice for refusing to accept the Covenant. It is impossible to tell of what communion Mr. Brice was. The statement would appear to imply that he was a minister here at the period named; but the ordinary account is that the first Presbyterian minister who was permanently fixed in Belfast was Anthony Shaw, in 1646. His stay was brief, though long enough to put it in his power to upbraid Lord Montgomery for delivering up the town which he had entered to defend and support—a treacherous proceeding, and contrary to the principles on which he had hitherto acted. Mr. Shaw's charge here concurring with that event, he was therefore the minister who, in the exercise of ecclesiastical interference with civil matters, administered to the false lord a sharp rebuke. No account is preserved of anything else which he did during his short and troubled retention of the office of minister of Belfast. He soon after fled to Scotland from the persecution of his enemies.<sup>1</sup>

Anthony Shaw was succeeded, it has been said, by a Mr. Read, but all research has failed in discovering the time of his settlement here, or how long he held the charge. So little is known of him that he is placed by Dr. Bruce, in the *Christian Moderator*,

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<sup>1</sup> It has been stated that Anthony Shaw retired to Scotland and never returned, but in the list of Presbyterian ministers in Ireland in 1657 one of the same name is mentioned as being fixed at Ballywalter. The name *Anthony* is rather unusual, and there is a possibility that this may have been the same person.



as before Shaw—in fact, as the first minister of Belfast; but as no date is given, nor any corroborative facts, his history must yet continue in obscurity.

In 1647 the Presbyterian interest in the country had some consistency, “as in addition to several chaplains of the Scottish regiments and occasional supplies from Scotland, there were nearly thirty ordained ministers permanently settled in Ulster.”<sup>1</sup> This appearance of progress was interrupted by the execution of the King in 1649, and it was soon after this that the short reaction took effect which placed Belfast for a limited period in the power of the Royalists, acting in favour of the new monarch. The Presbyterians were also Royalists, but subject to conditions not acceptable to those who concurred with them on the broad principle. After long discussions, the discordant parties could form no permanent union, till the Independents—or by whatever other name they may be called—brought arguments to a close, and became, by their successes in war, the virtual Government of the country. During this period of trouble no specific Presbyterian minister was settled in Belfast. Since Mr. Shaw had abandoned his charge, none had found therein a sure resting-place. When the Government was firmly fixed, one of the great changes which it brought about was the establishment of what modern times understand as concurrent ecclesiastical endowment. In the *Irish Civil List* of 1655 no less than 150 ministers are represented as receiving from the State liberal yearly salaries. They are Churchmen, Independents, Baptists, and but a few Presbyterians. These last generally held aloof for a time, deeming it against conscientious convictions to accept pecuniary aid from a Government that ruled without a King or House of Lords, and that rejected the Covenant. They refused to recognise the fast days chosen for public worship, to offer up prayers for Oliver Cromwell after the Royalist fashion, to return thanks for his escape from assassination, and, most extraordinary of all, they refused for a season to accept his money. This last scruple being

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<sup>1</sup> Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 43.

attended with some household inconvenience, a compromise was effected by the intervention of influential persons who desired well to Presbyterianism. It was represented that, by accepting, in common with other denominations, the salary of the Government for professional duties, they were not thereby disowning their principles, because, as Cromwell had appropriated the tithes and church lands, the payment of the clergy was presumed to be derived from these sources; and as their body had at first received the tithes, they were merely getting again what was their own, to which they alleged they had an original title, and which they were pleased to designate their "legal maintenance." This is one of the points of dispute between Presbyterian and Episcopal writers from that day to this, and this the phrase which the latter represent as an ecclesiastical misnomer. It ended, however, about 1655 by the Presbyterian clergy coming into the circle of those who were the recipients of the bounty of the State. This did not require any abandonment of their fixed opinions or principles; no conditions—at least so far as the bare language of the Cromwellian orders and directions would imply—being annexed, but that they should be "pious, holy, gracious men, fitly qualified for publishing the truth of the Gospel, and of sober peaceable spirits." Occasional severity was used, no doubt, towards individual ministers for more than ordinary opposition to the Government; for, though treated with liberality in a pecuniary sense, their animosity against what they considered illegality and usurpation was unsubdued.

During those days Belfast as a ministerial charge was vacant. Though Presbyterianism was being extended throughout the country, and generally an era of comparative prosperity had dawned upon it, no minister of that persuasion was permitted to reside here, for it, like several others around, being a garrison town or army quarters, had to be served by an Independent or Baptist teacher. Accordingly, no Presbyterian minister is named in the long list of those who were "on salary" as being placed in or officiating in Belfast. The minister of the town, recognised and appointed by the Government, was William Dix, either

an Independent, or, more probably, a Baptist. Essex Digby, the Episcopalian, was also here ; and both were certainly resident in 1657. With the ministrations of these two the inhabitants had to be contented, though Presbyterian clergymen, it cannot well be doubted, still exercised their vocation in the town, if not openly, at least with sufficient vigilance to keep alive in their people the principles of their faith.

The religious situation at this period is curiously exemplified in the account of a violent personal attack made upon Mr. Dix, when in the performance of his duty in Belfast, by a Presbyterian minister stationed in a locality immediately adjoining. It shows in strong colours the confidence or presumed power of the Presbyterian body, coinciding with the historical fact of their immunity from any serious disabilities, and, less directly, their influence and extension in the country. Henry Cromwell, the Lord Deputy, writing from "the Phoenix," 22nd September, 1657, states that he has received "a Petition from Mr. William Dix by which it appears that while divers sober and peaceable people were in the public Meeting Place in Belfast to hear Mr. Dix and to seek the Lord, Mr. Henry Livingston preacher at Drumbo came with a tumultuous assemblage and with reviling pulled Mr. Dix out of the pulpit affirming that they were authorized by the Presbytery to do so, and would do the like again, an evil dangerous example disturbing the public peace and authority of the Government."<sup>1</sup> The Lord Deputy requires Sir John Clotworthy, Sir John Skevington, and Major Rawdon

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Reid slightly alludes to this affair, but perhaps did not know the full particulars, brought to light, as in the above notice, from the *Cromwellian Papers* in the Record Tower, Dublin Castle. Patrick Adair, in his *Narrative*, does not mention it at all, and Dr. Reid merely says that "Mr. Livingston had in some unbecoming manner reflected on the principles or character of some of the surrounding sects"—rather a demonstrative mode of reflecting, if Dix, in his complaint to Henry Cromwell, did not exaggerate the account of the usage which he had received. If not, Mr. Livingston's conduct was discreditable, as he was at the very time of this unseemly escapade in receipt of a salary of £100 a-year from the Government whose official he had treated with so much violence. The Presbytery must have condemned Livingston's conduct, as they administered to him a reproof, and sent Mr. Drisdaile and Mr. Hart to Henry Cromwell to give a

to inquire into the matter and punish the offenders, "particularly the said Livingston." This transaction gives occasion for a local inquiry. In what house was Mr. Dix officiating when made the subject of this outrage? Could it have been in the church, on the principle that, as he and Mr. Digby received concurrent endowment and of equal amount, so the only known building then in the town for public worship served under arrangement the purposes of both? Mr. Dix, it is said, was "pulled out of the pulpit," language which would almost exclude the idea of a private house being that in which he was then ministering to the people; and if not the church, it raises the possibility that, as early as 1657, a meeting-house had been erected by the Presbyterians at some of the places mentioned in the introduction, and which the owners were obliged to abandon to Mr. Dix, for the time, by reason of Belfast being a garrison town.

When the Restoration arrived, Mr. William Keyes is found the Presbyterian minister of Belfast, but the circumstances under which he was called to the charge are not related. He was an Englishman, and, it may naturally be supposed from his subsequent career, possessed of talent and influence. He was the medium selected by his brethren to present their congratulatory address to Charles the Second on his restoration to the throne of his ancestors, but must have been mortified to find it would not be accepted without the suppression of the clause against popery, prelacy, and heresy. This looked ominous, and a prelude to what soon after happened—the ejection of the Presbyterian ministers from their charges unless they conformed to Episcopacy. They had now abundant reason to look back with regret, some of them, perhaps, with not a little compunction, on the liberal rule of the Cromwells. In the words of their own historian, they "were either banished, imprisoned, or driven into

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full account of the matter, possibly to apologise for it. The base usage of Dix by Livingston, and its subsequent results, are at length in the *Pinkerton MSS.* copied from the *Cromwellian Papers*, and there is no doubt of its substantial correctness. It is worth noting that in another Cromwellian paper, sent to me by Mr. Prendergast, William Dix is mentioned as of Derriaghy, a parish quite near Belfast.

corners." Their general history throughout the reign of Charles the Second is very interesting. Some gleams of sunshine appeared during that time, the principal of which was the establishment in 1672 of the first *Regium Donum*, consisting of £600 a-year, among all the ministers in the north of Ireland—a very small contribution compared with that bestowed on them by Cromwell. The Covenant, it may be supposed, was burnt in Belfast as in other places, though the *Town Records*, which might have been expected to contain some notice of the event if it happened, are silent on the subject, nor do they afford any evidence of the persecution of those times. Mr. Keyes did not conform, but held firmly to his faith and his church. He was one of those accused or suspected of complicity in Blood's plot, the extent of participation in which by the Presbyterian clergy is one of the disputed points of their history. Many of them, however, were imprisoned or banished in consequence of it, and in the latter class was the minister of Belfast. He was banished to Galway, and the town was again without any open religious service except that of the Episcopal Church. This continued for two years, when in 1664 Mr. Keyes was permitted to return to Belfast, where he remained till 1673, his ministry here then ceasing by his removal to Dublin.

The conclusion of the ministry of Mr. Keyes was distinguished by some remarkable proceedings, which show the depressed state of Presbyterianism—in this town at least—in 1673. "Mr. Keyes informs the Meeting<sup>1</sup> of the dissatisfaction of Lady Donegall with the matter of his transportation." The meeting appointed a letter to be written by Mr. Patrick Adair, then of Cairncastle, to Mr. Bryan, that he may inform that noble family about the business, "and to study to give them satisfaction. . . . Master P. Adair observed the Meeting's

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<sup>1</sup> That is, the Antrim Meeting of Presbyterian Ministers, in which this case of Mr. Keyes is reported at considerable length, and a very good account of which, and the appointment of Patrick Adair, is in M'Comb's *Presbyterian Almanack* for 1859, p. 63.



appointment in writing to Mr. Brian."<sup>1</sup> "1674, January 6th. Thomas Hall and Robert Cunningham, respectively ministers of Larne and Broad Island, were appointed to wait upon Lord and Lady Donegall, upon advertisement from the people of Belfast, and to represent to those noble persons the sad condition of that place for want of a settled ministry, and deal with them for the *people's liberty to choose whom they please*, with the Meeting's consent, according to principles owned by us, which if they refuse to grant, the Brethren aforesaid are to leave the obstruction of the planting of that place at their door." February 3, 1674. The former appointment of Messrs. Hall and Cunningham in furtherance of this matter is referred to, and the people in Belfast are now to be advised to make their first application to Mr. Brian, desiring him to deal with my Lord and Lady Donegall<sup>2</sup> about settling a minister. This goes on for a length of time, in a manner soliciting for permission to choose whom they desired, finishing with the information that the two ministers who were by appointment negotiating the case had conferred with the

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<sup>1</sup> It has not been possible to obtain full information respecting Mr. Brian, whose interest with the Donegall family was expected to be so potent in influencing their proceedings on Belfast Presbyterian calls. He is described as Lord Donegall's chaplain. In this latter character he is represented as attending with Claudius Gilbert the funeral of the first Earl in 1675. He was friendly to the Presbyterians, and his name often occurs in the account of the long discussions attending the removal of Mr. Keyes and the appointment of his successor.

<sup>2</sup> The Lady Donegall here mentioned was Letitia Hicks, third wife of the first Earl of Donegall, and herself of dissenting inclinations. "She was a lady pious, discreet, and credible" is the character given of her by Richard Baxter; and it is also stated that "Emlyn, the celebrated Arian, succeeded Mr. Boyce as her chaplain, and preached every Sunday evening in the Castle Hall." These quotations are from the *Pinkerton MSS.* His well-known care in extracting will be sufficient guarantee for their accuracy. The daughter of this lady, the Countess of Longford, was possibly of different opinions—at least not of Presbyterian inclinations—as in her will, after leaving "£100 to the poor and decayed inhabitants of Belfast," she bequeaths "£50 additional to the poor of Belfast that were of the Church of England." A slight error crept in at p. 257, *ante*; in mentioning the Countess of Donegall instead of the Countess of Longford, her daughter, as calling James Macartney her cousin. It was the Lady Anne, who died Countess of Longford in 1697, who so speaks of the judge, and so willed to Alice, his wife, the legacy there mentioned. See Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. i., p. 336.



noble persons, and now advise the brethren to forbear for a little, but to leave it to the people of the town to apply to his Lordship. Finally a favourable report is made by Lord Donegall; and it is then represented that the congregation have fixed their eyes on Patrick Adair, who became, through all these obstructions and explanations, the Presbyterian minister of Belfast in 1674. Truly Presbyterian lines are cast in these days in pleasant places, when they exercise, as by right they should, the sole government and control over their Church and all belonging to it, and permit no interference from lordly or any other power on earth.

Patrick Adair, the new and only Presbyterian minister of Belfast in his day, was an able and influential man, the leading member and director of his Church in Ireland, when much address and talent were required to guide it. He had himself been imprisoned when in his former charge; but, placed in Belfast, he at once assumed his rightful position. He was chosen to confer with statesmen and others high in office on all the affairs of the Presbyterian body, and was one of those, when his reputation and ability were fully established, who was sent to England to congratulate the Prince of Orange on his arrival,<sup>1</sup> and to tender to him the sympathy and support of the community which he represented. He was the author of the work called

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<sup>1</sup> Adair's coadjutor on this mission was the Rev. John Abernethy of Coleraine, the great-grandfather of the famous medical man of the same name of recent years, and father of the Reverend John Abernethy of Antrim. Abernethy of Antrim, afterwards of Wood Street, Dublin, was well known for his writings and for his participation in the theological controversies of the beginning of the last century. The ancestry and birthplace of John Abernethy, the great surgeon, his grandson, excited some inquiry lately, and in *Notes and Queries* (1873, pp. 345, 390, 454, 511) it is made out that he himself was born in London in 1764, and that his ancestry was as above stated. His grandfather was one of the ablest men that has ever adorned the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. His sermons and other writings, which are still read, drew forth high praise from Dr. Samuel Johnson.

In the preface to Abernethy's sermons the following note will be found:—"John Abernethy in 1693, on his way from Coleraine to Glasgow College, was diverting himself at Belfast with a servant who attended him, upon the Great Bridge by which that town is joined to the County of Down. They stood upon the Bridge a considerable time, but Mr. Abernethy happening to cast his eye upon

*Adair's Narrative*,<sup>1</sup> so long lost and sought for, and first published only a few years ago, and which forms the foundation of the history of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland. After presiding over the congregation of Belfast for twenty years, he died in 1694, and in his time Presbyterianism acquired an ascendancy in this town in spite of all the obstacles calculated, or rather intended, to repress it. The full history of the life and actions of Patrick Adair is not to be entered on. He partook, no doubt, of ideas which would now be deemed puerile, but the general character for goodness and talent which he acquired in his lifetime has not departed from him. His particular actions when in charge of the one meeting-house in Belfast are nowhere preserved, and he left the world before the disunion took place which separated the original body into two separate sections.

Mr. Adair's successor was the Rev. John M'Bride, a man almost equally eminent. Mr. M'Bride was an author of some repute, and was teacher to the candidates for the ministry. He was on terms of intimacy with the Donegall family, and it has been stated that by his influence the leases of the ground on which the two meeting-houses stand in Rosemary Street were obtained. He also suffered persecution in times of high political excitement, when any divergence in thought or opinion from the established formula of the belief of the dominant party was considered to be but the index of concealed rebellion. Mr. M'Bride was a Presbyterian non-juror, therefore a presumed favourer of the exiled dynasty. This seems to have been an unfounded charge, his refusal to take the oath only arising from the belief that

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something at a distance which caught his fancy they ran off on a sudden, and the moment they removed, the arch upon which they had been standing fell down, so they very narrowly escaped being crushed to pieces : a very remarkable interference of Providence in preserving his life."

It is stated in *Joy's MSS.* and elsewhere that seven arches of the old Long Bridge fell in 1692, not long after its completion. Could this have been the same occurrence as that which was so nearly proving fatal to Mr. Abernethy? The years do not correspond.

<sup>1</sup> The *Narrative* is known, or should be known, to all Presbyterians. The extent to which Dr. Reid's more ample history is indebted to it is acknowledged by himself.

it required him to swear that the Pretender was not the son of King James the Second, which he alleged he could not conscientiously do. For this modified form of non-jurorism, however, he was so much persecuted that he had to fly for safety to Scotland; and so sensitive were the authorities at any evasion or infringement of their decrees, that when an excited official went to his house in Belfast to arrest him, and found that he had fled, he thrust his sword, in his impotent anger, through the band in his picture.<sup>1</sup> There is much about Mr. M'Bride in *Presbyterian Loyalty*, no doubt perfectly authentic, and his unreserved language occasionally made him a ready subject for Dr. Tisdall's charges against the general body. Besides his attempted arrest in Belfast, he was summoned to Dublin to explain his offence of publishing, as from a Presbyterian source, a sermon in advocacy of the opinion "that the Christian

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<sup>1</sup> This contemporary portrait of the Rev. John M'Bride hangs at this moment in the vestry of the First Congregation, Belfast. The orifice made by the sword through the band, though now much filled in with paint and varnish, is still quite discoverable. It is the portrait of a good-humoured, genial man, entirely destitute—so far as pictures can tell us—of all evil thoughts to king, country, or fellow-creature.

After his flight from the violent official in Belfast, the congregation was not well able to do without him, and they sent Mr. Samuel Smith to Glasgow, where he had taken refuge, to invite him to return. His arrival in Belfast in September, 1713, is related in *Presbyterian Loyalty* (p. 538) in the most simple manner, and he is entirely exculpated by the author from the imputations against him. Dr. Victor Ferguson writes an excellent letter on the subject, and the names of several other Belfast people are mentioned as taking interest in the frivolous charges raised against him.

Three of John M'Bride's works are among the earliest ever printed in Belfast, as stated in the *Pinkerton MSS.* They are—

"*Animadversions on the Defence of the Answer to a Paper entitled—'The Case of the Dissenting Protestants of Ireland in reference to a Bill of Indulgence from the Exceptions made against it. Together with an Answer to a Peaceable and Friendly Address to the Nonconformists written upon their desiring an Act of Toleration without the Sacramental Test.'*" (Belfast) Printed in the year 1697 : 4to, pp. 118.

"*A Sermon before the Provincial Synod at Antrim.* (Belfast) 1698 ; 4to, pp. 20.

"*A Vindication of Marriage as solemnised by Presbyterians in the North of Ireland.* By a Minister of the Gospel. (Belfast) 1702 ; 4to, pp. 71."

Mr. M'Bride was also author of *A Sample of Jet Black Prelatic Calumny.*

Church possesses the inherent right of self-government.”<sup>1</sup> He indeed escaped the sword on this occasion, but was rebuked by the Bishops for presuming to publish at all. After due examination he was permitted to go back to Rosemary Street, and ordered to conduct himself for the future with more respect to the spiritual lords. He was a talented and inoffensive man, but he lived in perilous days. His death took place either in 1718 or 1721, most probably the latter.<sup>2</sup> Some make 1723 the year of his decease.

The next minister of the First Congregation was the Rev. Thomas Milling, who had been Mr. M'Bride's co-pastor. His ministry continued only for five years.<sup>3</sup>

Upon the death of Mr. Milling, the Rev. Samuel Haliday succeeded to the pastorate of the First Congregation. The actual date of Mr. Haliday's installation is uncertain, as his appointment was attended with considerable delay and opposi-

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Killen's *Ecclesiastical History of Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 188.

<sup>2</sup> It is disappointing to find the wills of these two eminent and successive Belfast ministers, Adair and M'Bride, so devoid of interest, containing no hint of the trials they had passed through, or the eventful history of the times. Enclosed in Patrick Adair's will is a notice that it was lost for 100 years, as it is known that his *Narrative* was. To his name Adair appends the letters “Clk.,” indicating a title used by the Established clergy only. He desires to be buried in Belfast. He bequeaths to his wife the full interest of £400 in the Earl of Donegall's hands, and the half of his furniture and plate; the other half to his three sons. He leaves the half of his books to his son William; “out of the other half I leave to my wife such a number of practical books for her own use as she, with consent of the rest of the Executors, shall think meet to choose;” also to his daughter Ellen “some practical books.”

Victor Ferguson is one of the witnesses to this will, which is dated 1695.

John M'Bride's will is as destitute of any really interesting items as the preceding. He seems to have possessed a considerable amount of property. It is dated 8th July, 1718. He styles himself simply “minister of the Gospel.” He says—“I leave to my son David now abroad a Guinea to be paid to him at his return; also I leave a Guinea to my son Alexander together with any Physick Books I have; also I leave a Guinea to my son-in-law Hugh Dyat and his wife Margaret M'Bride. I leave no more to these mentioned in regard I have already given them what portions I could allow 'em.”

In the *Presbyterian Almanack* for 1877, p. 77, Robert M'Bride, the son of John, is stated to have been chosen minister of Ballymoney in 1716.

<sup>3</sup> *Bible Christian* for 1837, p. 114.

tion; but the call took place in 1720. He was a very noted and distinguished minister, had been educated on the Continent, ordained at Geneva, was an army chaplain for some years, and served in that capacity in the Duke of Marlborough's campaigns. It was in Mr. Haliday's pastorate the disruption took place which separated several congregations from the larger body of Presbyterians, the difference of opinion between the parties originating so long before as the year 1705. About that time the famous Belfast Society had its rise, which was the name adopted by the ministers who were opposed to their brethren in the matter of subscription to creeds of human composition. Mr. Haliday was a non-subscriber, and not the least able or prominent of those who took part in the conflict of sermons and pamphlets which issued for many years from the Belfast press. The formation of the Presbytery of Antrim resulted from this disagreement, Mr. Haliday and his congregation uniting with that non-subscribing body which seceded from the General Synod in 1726. Mr. Haliday's talents and position, the changes which occurred in the Presbyterian Church while he had charge of the Old Congregation, and the connection of his descendants with the town, might justly claim an enlarged account of the man and of the times, but the general subject is treated elsewhere at much length,<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Haliday of Belfast, the son of this eminent minister, will appear in relations of a conspicuous stamp at a subsequent period.

Mr. Haliday's death took place in 1738. In 1736 he had obtained the Rev. Thomas Drennan as his colleague, by whom he was succeeded. Mr. Drennan was pastor of the congregation

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<sup>1</sup> By Dr. Reid, in his *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. iii. ; and more succinctly by the Rev. John Scott Porter, in the *Bible Christian* for 1837, pp. 375-80.

Mr. Haliday's will is as much without real curious or noteworthy items as are those of Adair and M'Bride. His means and station were different from those of the greater number of Presbyterian ministers. He leaves £500 to his wife, "and the £200 pr. annum she possessed as relict of the late Arthur Maxwell, Esq., also all his plate and furniture in proof of his affection, and the Leases of the Fields on the road to Shankhill, &c."



for thirty-two years—"an elegant scholar, a man of fine taste, overflowing benevolence, and delicate sensibility."<sup>1</sup> Such were his character and acquirements in the language of Dr. Bruce. He was father of Dr. William Drennan, still remembered to his

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<sup>1</sup> The Reverend Thomas Drennan was the intimate friend and correspondent of Dr. Francis Hutcheson. Fourteen letters written by the latter to the former have been entrusted to me for examination by the present Dr. Drennan of Belfast, who is grandson of the Rev. Thomas Drennan. They are always addressed "Dear Thom," and prove not only the close intimacy referred to, but the interest which Dr. Hutcheson took in ecclesiastical affairs in Belfast and his acquaintance with them. The earliest of these letters is dated in 1737, the latest in 1746. They mention the public events of the day, and of the College of Glasgow, of which, it is unnecessary to say, the writer was one of the most eminent professors, and contain many excellent and proper sentiments, and also many notes referring to Belfast and persons in it, which should be extracted at full length, and which can be, even in a note, but glanced at. The only undated letter in the entire has the following words to "Dear Thom":—

"Upon conversation with Mr. Brown who came lately from Ireland along with Mr. Alex. Haliday about the circumstances of some ministers—very worthy men—in your Presbytery; it occurred to me that a little liberality could not be better exercised than among them. . . . If you have any little contributions made toward such as are more distressed than the rest you may mark me as a subscriber for £5 <sup>⁹</sup>/<sub>an<sup>m</sup></sub> and take the above £10 as my payment for the two years past. I think it altogether proper you should not mention my name to your brethren but conceal it. I am already called New Light here. I don't value it for myself but I see it hurts some ministers here who are most intimate with me. . . . I am greatly concerned for your divisions in Belfast. I find they talk of Jack Maxwel of Armagh or young Kennedy. The talents of this latter I know not, but believe he has a very honest heart."

This was Mr. Gilbert Kennedy, Dr. Kirkpatrick's successor.

A letter dated "Glasgow, 5th August, 1743," begins—"I have had two letters of late from Mr. Mussenden, one about five weeks ago, with an invitation to Mr. Leechman to succeed Dr. Kirkpatrick. . . . You never knew a better, sweeter man, of excellent literature, and, except his air and a little roughness of voice, the best preacher imaginable. You could not get a greater blessing among you of that kind. . . . He is well as he is, and happy, though preaching to a pack of horse coopers and smugglers of the rudest sort. . . . He was the man I wished to be our Professor of Theology." He did succeed to that important office in the University of Glasgow, most probably by Dr. Hutcheson's influence, and never came to Belfast, as Mr. Mussenden and other members of the Second Congregation might have desired. Another letter, blaming his correspondent for not informing him about "the settlement of Belfast in which he was greatly interested," is signed playfully "I am, Lazy Thom, yours &c." In another are these two passages—"I hope Jack Smith has sent to your town *A Serious Address to the Kirk of Scotland*, lately published in London; it has run like lightning here . . . the author is unknown; 'tis wrote with anger and contempt of the



honour in Belfast. Mr. Drennan died in 1768, having had no less than three colleagues, Mr. Miller, Mr. Brown, and Mr. M'Kay, the last of whom succeeded him, and continued minister of the congregation till his death in 1781. In 1770 Dr. Crombie was invited from Scotland to become colleague to Mr. M'Kay, and succeeded to the sole pastorate on the death of the latter. Besides his ministerial office, Dr. Crombie was Head Master of the Belfast Academy. He died in 1790.

Dr. Wm. Bruce succeeded Dr. Crombie in both offices, but to him and others who have since been ministers of the First Congregation of Belfast it is unnecessary to refer, so recent have been their lives, and so well known their distinguished attainments and learning.

The first minister of the Second Congregation, which issued in 1708, as already mentioned, from the old and early one, was the Rev. James Kirkpatrick, who had been settled in Templepatrick for a few years previously. He acted as colleague for a short time to M'Bride. Dr. Stephenson<sup>1</sup> says that Kirkpatrick, when rather advanced in life, studied medicine, "of which as well as in divinity he was a graduate, and practised as a physician in Belfast for many years before his death. He was a learned gentleman and facetious companion, and was much esteemed as a medical practitioner." He was also a non-subscriber, and co-operator with Mr. Haliday in all his endeavours in favour of that principle. He is best remembered

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Kirk and Confession." "A worthy lad in this Town one Robt. Foulis out of a true public spirit undertook to reprint for the Populace an old excellent Book *A Persuasive to mutual Love and Charity*, wrote by White, Oliver Cromwell's Chaplain; it is a divine old fashioned thing." Such are a few of the merest scraps possible from these letters. They contain many references to the Haliday family and other Belfast persons. The eminence of Dr. Hutcheson, to any reader not already acquainted with it, will be known by referring to any biographical dictionary, and a brief account of his family and of himself is in Dr. Stuart's *History of Armagh*, pp. 487-492, to the close neighbourhood of which city they belonged. The letters prove how much too short is the history of Belfast Presbyterianism in this work. The subject would of itself form a volume.

<sup>1</sup> *Historical Essay on the Parish and Congregation of Templepatrick*, by S. M. Stephenson, M.D., p. 43.

as author of *Presbyterian Loyalty*, a work generally well known to the inquiring inhabitants of that faith in Belfast, and often referred to in these pages. Though destitute of all pretensions to anything ornate or picturesque in style, and seemingly not very well arranged, it is a solid and instructive production, and in the latter part particularly, in which the author introduces some Belfast occurrences and the names of many inhabitants of the town of his time, is extremely worthy of attentive perusal. Besides *Presbyterian Loyalty* he published several sermons, and was a leading member of the Belfast Society. He held the pastorate of the Second Congregation till his death in 1744.<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Gilbert Kennedy was the next minister of this congregation, and must have accepted the non-subscribing principle which distinguished it from the beginning. He appears to have continued his connection with the General Synod, but his opinions were not in accord, or rather were altogether opposed, to the Westminster formularies.<sup>2</sup> Of Mr. Kennedy and his successors the best account will be in the words of one well qualified to speak of them—

“Mr. Kennedy was a man of note in his day. His son, Mr. James Traill Kennedy, of Annadale, died about forty years ago, leaving no male representative. Mr. James Bryson became minister of the congregation in 1776 or 1778. He was a man of great talent and eloquence. He prevailed on the congregation to withdraw from the Presbytery of Antrim, with which it had been so long connected, and rejoin the Synod of Ulster. . . . It was during his incumbency that the present beautiful and commodious church of the Second Congregation was erected, and a large proportion of the funds necessary for its completion was collected by his energetic exertions. In consequence of some dissatisfaction on the part of some members of the congregation he resigned the pastoral charge, and with those who still adhered to his ministry founded what was long known as the Fourth Congregation, now the Donegall Street Presbyterian Church. Mr. Bryson published a volume of excellent sermons in the year 1778, and

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Kirkpatrick's father was minister of Ballymoney, and Moderator of the Synod in 1699. See *Presbyterian Almanack* for 1877, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 358.

twelve quarto volumes of his sermons in MS. are in the Antrim Library, now deposited in the Queen's College, Belfast. Some of these are curious, as having been preached in the Cathedral of Lisburn while the Presbyterian meeting-house was under repair, and in which town Mr. Bryson had been for some years minister before his removal to Belfast. Others might be used for correcting or completing family annals, having been delivered at, or soon after, the funerals of members of his congregations and other persons of local distinction.

"Mr. Bryson was succeeded (1791) by the Rev. Patrick Vance, a man who was held in universal respect, but whose ministry did not last long, having been terminated by his lamented death in 1799. He was succeeded in that year by Dr. William Hamilton Drummond, author of various theological and poetical works.

"In the interval between the resignation of Mr. Bryson and the settlement of Mr. Vance, the Second Congregation returned to the Presbytery of Antrim."<sup>1</sup>

The Third Congregation was formed from the First and Second when controversy became too warm, and when the adherents of subscription to a formula wished no longer to abide with those who considered such unnecessary. The Building Book already referred to has this cheerful and satisfactory heading—"We the subscribers hereunto doe voluntarily promise to joyne in that agreeable project in Erecting a new Meeting House in Belfast and will assist in Contributing towards the Building of the same and for the Suport of a Minister called in the orderly way. 4 July, 1721." So far as the book informs us, there was no dissension at the time of the separation from the other two bodies save a distant grumble which partially appears in these entries in 1723:—"By Cash from the other Two Congregations being but a part of our just demand £40 14s. 7d.;" and "By Cash of old arreare overpaying Mr. Hallyday his dew £23 6s. 3½d."

When the building of the new erection was completed, the first minister called thereto was the Rev. Charles Mastertown, in 1723. He had already distinguished himself in a former sphere of duty in opposition to the non-subscribers, and continued to be

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<sup>1</sup> Extracts from a letter of the Rev. John Scott Porter, Belfast.

their firm opponent. The numerous productions which the Belfast Society and the subscribers gave to the reading public of the day are chiefly known now but to theological students or minute inquirers into Presbyterian history, and it is said that the best work which has survived the controversy is Mr. Mastertown's *Treatise on the Trinity*, published in 1728, and many editions of which have since appeared, one so lately as 1827.<sup>1</sup> There are many entries in the old Building Book regarding Mr. Mastertown, who seems to have been very kindly treated. His congregation got him a house. Frequent mention is made of presents of money to him; the sums, indeed, were not very large, generally £4 0s. 0d. In 1726 they bought a horse for him for £6 5s. 0d.; and in 1744, when stricken in years, they presented him with a chair, which is charged in the book at £4 5s. 0d. Among the miscellaneous entries are—"1723. By Cash from Mr. Mastertown y<sup>t</sup> was sent him by Mr. Gray in Dublin for 50 of his own Books, £1 12s. 6d." Entries regarding Mr. Mastertown's books and Mr. Dunlop's sermons at 5s. 5d. "a voloum" are frequent. A curious entry is—"Paid R. Watte Skiper for y<sup>e</sup> Duty on Mr. Mastertown's Books 1s. 4d. 1724." As topographical facts "Petter Hill and Sandie Row" are mentioned as the residences of those to whom seats were allotted. The prices of the "Cupes" for the communion, the "Cloks" and palls for the funerals, two "Flagines," and several other items are all set forth. In the scarcity of contemporary records respecting the history of early Presbyterianism in Belfast, this book should be carefully preserved by the great congregation to which it belongs.

Mr. Mastertown was succeeded in 1747 by the Rev. William Laird, who had been his colleague for some years. Mr. Laird was a most zealous minister, and maintained through a lengthened pastorate the principles of the Third Congregation. His father was also a Presbyterian minister, and he occupied in every respect a good position in the town, notwithstanding which no

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<sup>1</sup> Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 258.

particulars have been procured of his personal history.<sup>1</sup> He died in 1791, and a very eloquent funeral sermon was preached on the occasion by Mr. Bryson. He had long had as colleague a well-known minister, the appointment of whom is noted in the Session's Book in the following words:—"25th October, 1779. Resolved unanimously—That we choose Mr. Sinclair Kelburn as a proper person to be an assistant to our present dear Pastor the Rev. William Laird." The congregation was so large at Mr. Laird's death in 1791 that an immediate movement was made for an assistant to Kelburn, who succeeded him, the resolution declaring that "the number was too great for any one minister to attend to;" but it does not appear that such resolve then took effect, political troubles, perhaps, interposing to disturb the congregation. The following notice of Mr. Kelburn has been written by another<sup>2</sup>:—

"Sinclair Kelburn was minister of the Third Congregation when Theobald Wolfe Tone came to Belfast to 'organise' the North, and in Tone's *Memoirs* there are several notices of this remarkable man. He was certainly a very remarkable man in many respects, as an orator, a divine, and a politician, and as a genial companion unrivalled in his day. He was a very advanced Liberal; but it does not appear that he was ever connected with the Society of United Irishmen. He may have sympathised with their objects without connecting himself with their body or approving of all their plans. It may be taken as an indication of his personal and ministerial popularity that a great number of families in Belfast called their children by his name."

All this is true. The facts can be a little supplemented from the congregational minutes of the Third Congregation. On 20th April, 1797, there is a notice importing that "our respected pastor Mr. Kelburne is about to be removed to Dublin by the hand of power." This was for alleged complicity in the actions of the United Irishmen; and his congregation soon after petitioned the Lord Lieutenant for his release, saying "they

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Laird was great-grandfather of Sir Thomas M'Clure, Bart., Belmont, Belfast.

<sup>2</sup> By Rev. John Scott Porter.



were greatly suffering for the loss of one who was superlatively remarkable for benevolence of heart and an ardent attachment to his pastoral duties." This petition was unsuccessful, as on the 30th July, 1797, it is said, "There is no prospect of having our pastor restored to us;" but he was at his post again in June, 1798. In October, 1799, he is asked to resign, on the grounds "that from the precarious state of your health which appears frequently to affect your mind, as also from some other important circumstances occurring, your usefulness as a minister among us has almost entirely ceased." He did resign as they wished; the thanks of the congregation were returned to him "for his very proper and Christian conduct in the business." Mr. Kelburn died in 1802.

Such is a sketch of the Presbyterianism of Belfast of the last century and of a previous time, of the houses in which it was taught, and the names of all the ministers who promulgated its doctrines. Abundant materials could no doubt be procured to extend the subject to a greater length, as the biography of the men whose names are here not much more than mentioned contains matter worthy of record. It will be seen that the First Congregation—the most historical—had a greater number of pastors than either of the others, and that in the seventeenth and a portion of the last century it bore alone the Presbyterian annals of Belfast. There are now in Belfast and its near suburbs thirty-three meeting-houses in connection with the General Assembly, and, by the census of 1871, 60,249 Presbyterians in the town, the entire united in concord by the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is their bond of union and the law of their Church; and they form the largest, and perhaps, it might be added, the most important and wealthy of the religious bodies in the town.

There was in the last century a considerable congregation of Seceders, having a house of worship in Berry Street, which was built in 1770 according to accounts hitherto, but a better authority (Dr. Knox) makes 1782 the year of its erection. This congregation, and one or two more of a similar kind subsequently established, have been merged in the Presbyterian Church, their



doctrinal opinions being identical. It should be said that in the last century there were some small assemblages of persons, generally meeting for worship in private rooms, who formed ultimately large congregations. The most important of these was probably the Linen Hall Street Church, which dates its origin to so early a time as 1761, when a few worshippers met together, but at first without any stated minister, in a house in the Old Lodge Road. They were Seceders originally, and built the Berry Street Church. Mr. Carmichael was the first fixed minister. He lived in Millfield, in his time a respectable neighbourhood; but the ablest minister of this congregation was the Rev. John Nicholson, who was appointed to it in 1799. Mr. Nicholson came from Larne, and a lengthened account of his life has been published by the Rev. Classen Porter, in which it is said that "he was a most liberal minded and most accomplished man—an excellent Hebraist and a first-rate classical scholar." His Belfast friends when he came among them fully endorsed these opinions, and when he died in 1814, from excessive ministerial labour, the laudations bestowed upon his memory were as sincere as they were numerous and well-deserved. The great congregation of Linen Hall Street is derived from the old Seceding Church in Berry Street, as the present respected minister has stated.

As a description of the Episcopal Church communion plate, with the inscriptions thereon, has been given, it would be unpardonable to omit a like notice of the Presbyterian salvers and cups in the First Congregation. They are—upon two salvers, "John Haselton's Gift to all the Meeting Houses in Belfast 1721;" upon one cup, "The Gift of James Stewart to the Meeting House of Belfast 1693;" upon another cup, "Donum Thcs. Crawford Cœtui Presbyter de Belfast 1698;" upon another, "James Martin," undated. These, as being old, and as belonging to the first and oldest of the Dissenting congregations in the town, are all which require to be noticed.

## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN BELFAST.

“In 1704, according to the Government Returns from the Clerks of the Peace, pursuant to the Act for Registering the Popish Clergy of Ireland,—

“The Rev. Phelomy O’Hamill was the Parish Priest of Belfast, Derriaghy, and Drum, the latter meaning the parishes of Drumbo and Drumbeg. He was registered at Carrickfergus 12 July, 1704, his sureties, according to the Act, being Conway Courtney of Aghalee, and Hugh Hamill of Carrickfergus, in £50 each. The return states he resided at Derriaghy, and received orders in 1677 from Dr. Oliver Plunkett, the titular Primate. The date of his death is not known, but his successor was the Rev. Mr. Magee, traditionally stated to have been Curate and Parish Priest for Fifty Years. He was succeeded in 1733 by the Rev. John O’Mullan, a native of Ballywillwill, in the parish of Kilmegan, County of Down. He was buried in Lambeg, where his tombstone still remains. He was succeeded in 1772 by the Rev. Hugh O’Donnell, a native of Glenarm. In August, 1812, Mr. O’Donnell resigned, and died December, 1813. On his resignation, the then Bishop, Dr. Patrick M’Mullan, separated Belfast from Derriaghy; to the latter appointing the Rev. Mr. M’Quoid, and to Belfast and its extensive district, as far as Ballyclare, the Rev. William Crolly, Professor of Logic, Metaphysics, and Ethics, and who was formally instituted in November, 1812, taking with him as his curate the Rev. Bernard M’Cauley, afterwards Vicar-General and Parish Priest of Downpatrick. Dr. Crolly continued Parish Priest of Belfast for thirteen years, and in 1824 was elected Bishop of Down and Connor by the suffrages of his brother clergymen, and was consecrated in Belfast 1st May. In 1825 he made Belfast instead of Downpatrick the mensal parish of the diocese, which it still continues to be.”

This narrative is brought down to a later period than those of the other religious bodies of Belfast, but this is excusable; it is derived from a trustworthy source,<sup>1</sup> and is but very brief. The history of the Roman Catholics in the town has hitherto been less known or inquired after than those of religious bodies at one time so much more numerous and influential. To the Catholic Church history of Belfast, as communicated in the foregoing

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<sup>1</sup> From the Rev. James O’Laverty, P.P., Holywood.

narrative, can be added an extremely interesting letter in corroboration of the statements respecting the first of the clergymen mentioned in it, and generally of the condition of the entire Catholic community at a certain period. It is an original paper, copied in 1875 from the Civil and Miscellaneous Correspondence in the Record Office, Dublin, being a letter addressed to Joshua Dawson, Secretary's Office, Dublin, in these words—

“BELFAST, *March 24, 1707*. 8.

“SIR,—In obedience to the Proclamation Issued by the Government and Council I immediately Issued a warrant against the Popish Priest within my Jurisdiction as Magistrate of Belfast; the Priest whose name is Phelomy O'Hamol immediately upon the first hearing of it, being Ill, wrote me a Letter that he would surrender himself to me, and as soon as he was able to come to town would wait upon me; accordingly he came on Monday last, but I being then at Antrim upon the Commission of Array for the Militia he stayed in this town till I came home, and hath this day surrendered himself to me. I have put him into our Town Gaol,<sup>1</sup> and desire you would communicate this account to their Exceys the Lds Justices, where I intend to keep him till I know their farther pleasure. His behaviour has been such amongst us since, and was, upon the late Revolution so kind to the Protestants by saving several of their goods in those times, that I had offered me the best Bail the Protests of this Country affords. However, the Proclamation being positive and no discretionary power left in us I would not Bail him: thank God we are not under any great fears here, for upon this Occasion I have made the Constables return me a List of all the Inhabitants with<sup>n</sup> this Town, and we have not amongst us within the town above seven Papists,<sup>2</sup> and by the return

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Macartney mentions the Town Gaol as the place of Mr. O'Hamill's confinement. Inquiry has failed to discover the locality, but several prisons of a temporary kind were in the town in past times. On September 11th, 1746, an advertisement offers for sale “A Tenement and Slaughter House in Castle Street now the Marshalsea House.” This has been a prison of some kind, but there never was, till the County Jail was erected in late years, a really good prison in Belfast.

<sup>2</sup> It is to be regretted that Mr. Macartney's letter, when so explicit as to the number of Catholics in the town in 1708, did not also mention the number of Protestants, which would have informed us of the entire gross population, as he uses the expression “all the inhabitants.”

made by the High Constable there is not above 150 Papists in the whole Barony: Favour me with an answer to this with the Govern<sup>mts</sup> pleasure therein.

“Your humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

“GEORGE MACARTNEY.”

Endorsed—“Let him Continue for the Present where he is.”

This last curt direction means that Mr. O’Hamill is to be detained in confinement—rather an ungrateful return for his acknowledged kindness when he had it in his power to bestow it; but it was the era of the Pretender’s rumoured invasions, and when the Government imagined that the sympathies both of Catholics and Presbyterians were much in favour of the exiled family. The militia were being raised, and a state of general alarm and uncertainty prevailed. It will be seen that there was not then in Belfast any resident priest nor any church for Catholic worship, Derriaghy or Hannahstown being the nearest for both. It is traditionally stated that mass was celebrated, and that perhaps only occasionally, in the open air at Friar’s Bush. Afterwards service came to be performed in a waste-house in Castle Street, but so unsuited for the purpose was it, that old persons who had worshipped in it have told the writer in his youth that they were obliged to take pieces of wood or bricks to kneel on, so mean and dirty was the place. It may have been an exaggerated story; but it was not till 1783 that the first chapel (St. Mary’s) was built in Belfast. Mr. O’Donnell was then the priest, being the first that was permanently resident in the town, which was not till long after the time of the building of the chapel, as from a notice in the books of the Linen Hall Library he resided in Derriaghy at the end of the century. He was very much respected, and will be remembered still by some old inhabitants. The Catholic population of course increased with the general extension of the town, and by the census of 1871 numbered 55,575 persons—an amazing increase, if Mr. Macartney’s statement be true that there were only seven members of the old faith in Belfast in the year 1708.

These are the three communities which constitute in this

country the great body of the population. The Baptists and Independents lost ground in Belfast after the Restoration, and though now having a few places of worship in the town they are all of comparatively modern origin, though there may have been a lingering remnant of one or both of these forms of faith unextinguished here through all chances and changes since the days of their power in the seventeenth century. It may likewise be noted that, in the just and undisturbed possession of religious freedom, almost all the more usual sects in the Christian world are represented in Belfast. Of all these minor denominations the Society of Friends is one requiring special observation, as its attempted introduction into the town is of very respectable antiquity, and was accompanied with some suggestive incidents. This Society, still very limited in number, has had a house of worship here for more than sixty years, but whether the faith itself had any professors, however few, from the days of its founder is not known. In the year 1655, however, William Edmundson, a zealous member of the body, thus relates in his Journal his unsuccessful efforts to win over to his opinions the stubborn inhabitants of Belfast :—

“At this time (1655) but few would lodge us in their houses ; at Belfast (that town of great profession) there was but one of all the Inns and Public Houses that would lodge any of our friends, which was one Widow Partridge, who kept a Public House, and received us very kindly ; there John Tiffin lodged, often endeavouring to get an entrance for truth in that town, but they resisted, shutting their Ears, Doors, and Hearts against it.

“Near this Town there dwelt one Leythes who promised to let us meet in his House and the day was appointed ; accordingly we came there,—that is, John Tiffin, my Brother and I ; but when we came the Man was gone from home as they said ; we supposed on purpose that we might not Meet at his House ; his Wife was a proud woman, and would not suffer us to meet there, so there were a little from that House in the great Road, Three-lane-Ends that met ; there we three sat down and kept our Meeting : People came about us ; we were a wonder to them, and something was spoken to direct their Minds to God’s Spirit in their own Hearts.”



John Leathes was Sovereign of Belfast in 1655, but as there were numerous persons of that name then in the town it would be impossible to ascertain which of them treated the Quaker in this uncourteous manner. What did Edmundson mean by describing Belfast as "a town of great profession"? The language, if taken in one sense, might have been applied disparagingly, as descriptive of a place in which there was more seeming than the genuine spirit of religion. There were Sectaries, Presbyterians, and Episcopalians in the town, and whether he merely expressed its general popular character, or aimed at any one of these bodies in particular, we are left in doubt. None of them, however, would listen to him. He uplifted his voice in vain, possibly, at the Four Corners,<sup>1</sup> though more success attended his efforts in other parts of the country.

The next body to be included in this Ecclesiastical History is the Methodist Church, which has sprung to unexampled maturity in a short period of time. The wonderful man who founded Methodism propagated it with a zeal and untiring personal labour beyond praise and beyond precedent. He first came to Belfast in the year 1756. Lisburn was a much earlier field of labour for Methodism than Belfast, as it was not till 1787 that a small house of worship for the connection was built in Fountain Street. This was their first permanent chapel, and when Methodism had acquired larger proportions was sold, having been advertised on 28th November, 1800, as the "present Methodist Preaching House situate in the lane west of Linen

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<sup>1</sup> More than one copy of William Edmundson's Journal has been looked at, but in only one of them was there observed the expression, "The Four Corners," as that spot in Belfast where William Edmundson preached. Having neglected to copy the words at the time they were seen, which is many years since, memory alone is to be depended on for their accuracy, but it is not likely to be faithless in this instance, as it was too strange to find a term applied two hundred and twenty years ago to what was, even in the end of the last century, a known locality in Belfast; but it is not advanced here as a certain fact.

One would like to know where the "Three-lane-Ends" were, and the residence of Mr. Leathes, near which Edmundson addressed his very small congregation; but, like so many other curious statements, it is quite without any explanatory remarks.



Hall Street. The Building strong and would make a good Store." It was converted into a dog kennel, then into a linen-lapping room; and, after passing probably through other changes, formed part quite lately of the Ulster Works in Fountain Street, and was the printing office, or a portion of it, of that great establishment. Wesley himself, it is likely, never officiated in this building, as it was erected so near the end of his life. He must have known of its erection, however, and may have seen and marked its progress. A Methodist house of worship of large size was built in Donegall Square in 1805, replaced in late years by one on the same site of far greater proportions, and many others in different parts of the town. The very small beginning of Methodism in Belfast, which has attained now so high a position, is worthy of special remark. In 1766 the amount contributed for its general support in this town was, in the June quarter, 5s. 5d.; in the September quarter, 7s. At the same time, or rather in 1763, a small society of very poor people met in an old slaughter-house for worship.<sup>1</sup>

In connection with Methodism in Belfast it is impossible to refrain from making a few extracts from John Wesley's Journal. They form a part of the ecclesiastical history of the town, and not the least interesting and life-like. Under the date of February 23rd, 1756, Wesley says—

"At seven I preached in the Market House to as large a congregation as at Lisburn and to near the same number in the morning. But some of them did not stay till I concluded. They went away in haste when I showed how 'Christ Crucified is to the Greeks foolishness.'"

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<sup>1</sup> For these and several other notes on early Methodism in towns and places in our neighbourhood the writer is indebted to the kindness of the Rev. Joseph W. M'Kay.

It is certainly proper to add to this note the remarkable fact, that while in 1766 Methodism was so poor in Belfast as only to contribute 5s. 5d. and 7s. as quarterly contributions, in our own day a single individual of the denomination has built at his sole cost, for the use of the Methodist body, a Memorial Church in Carlisle Circus, more beautiful, and perhaps at a greater expense, than any other ecclesiastical edifice yet in the town.

"1758. Sunday, May 14th. I preached in the Market House, Belfast, about one."

"1760. Monday, May 5th. After preaching in the Market Place at Belfast to a people who 'care for none of these things,' we rode on with a furious east wind to Carrickfergus."

"1762. Wednesday, April 21st. Where to preach in Belfast I did not know. It was too wet to preach abroad; and a dancing master was busily employed in the upper part of the Market House; till at Twelve the Sovereign put him out, by holding his Court there. While he was above I began below to a very serious and attentive audience. But they were all poor; the rich of Belfast 'cared for none of these things.'"

"1769. Thursday, April 6th. I designed to preach at noon in the Market House at Belfast; but it was pre-engaged by a dancing master: So I stood in the Street, which doubled the Congregation, to whom I strongly declared, 'All have sinned and are come short of the glory of God.' But this many of them had no ears to hear, being faithful followers of Dr. Taylor."<sup>1</sup>

"1771. Wednesday, July 3rd. At Ten I preached to a small Congregation, a mile from Belfast; and in the Market Place there at Twelve. I never saw so large a Congregation there before, nor one so remarkably stupid and ill-mannered: Yet a few should be excepted, even gentlemen, who seemed to know sense from nonsense. I have found as sensible men at Dublin as at Belfast, but men so self-sufficient I have not found." This is not very complimentary to the intelligence of the most of a Belfast audience in 1771.

"1778. Thursday, June 9th. I preached in the evening on one side of the New Church to far the largest Congregation I have seen in Ireland, but I doubt the bulk of them were nearly concerned in my Text, 'And Gallio cared for none of these things.'" A few years later—namely, in 1785—Wesley, writing of Belfast, says in his Journal—"I often wonder, that, among so civil a people we can do but little good." The New Church which he mentions in 1778 was St. Anne's in Donegall Street, then recently finished.

"1787. Saturday, June 9th. I preached at six in the Linen Hall to a numerous and seriously attentive congregation. . . . I preached

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<sup>1</sup> Wesley alludes here to Dr. John Taylor, the eminent Unitarian divine and writer of the last century. But it was a curious observation on his part, and probably, considering the station in life of his audience, a very mistaken one.

at Ten in the Linen Hall to double the congregation that attended in the evening."

"1789. Monday, June 8th. We went on to Belfast. I had at first thought of preaching in the Linen Hall; but the weather being very uncertain I went to the heads of the large Meeting House to desire the use of it, which they granted in the most obliging manner. It is the completest place of public worship I have ever seen. It is of an oval form; as I judge by my eye a hundred feet long, and seventy or eighty feet broad. It is very lofty, and has two rows of large windows, so that it is as light as our new chapel in London. And the rows of pillars, with every other part, are so finely proportioned, that it is beautiful in the highest degree. The House was so crowded both within and without (and indeed with some of the most respectable persons in the town) that it was with the utmost difficulty I got in; but I then found I went not up without the Lord; Great was my liberty of speech among them: Great was our Glorifying in the Lord, so that I gave notice contrary to my first design of my intending to preach there again in the morning; but soon after the sexton sent me word it must not be, for the crowds had damaged the House, and some of them had broke off and carried away the silver which was on the Bible in the pulpit; So I desired one of our Preachers to preach in our little House, and left Belfast early in the morning."

The house here described, as it appeared to Wesley's eyes in 1789, and as it still appears to the present generation, was that of the First Congregation in Rosemary Street, thus granted for the use of the apostle of Methodism with that liberality with which the body worshipping in it has ever been distinguished. Still they could scarcely be expected to submit to have their beautiful house, only six years built, wrecked, or to have petty larceny committed within its walls. The small house alluded to in the last sentence was possibly their own little conventicle in Fountain Street. When John Wesley encountered this enormous crowd in Rosemary Street, and preached "with holy rapture"—using that expression in its best and most glorious sense—he was in his eighty-sixth year, and at his outset in the town the small congregation which he is mentioned as having ministered to assembled in the miserable little slaughter-house traditionally said to have been in the direction of

Malone. Wesley was very frequently in Belfast. Advertisements of his arrivals and his rounds for different days in the neighbouring towns are often in the *News-Letter*; and besides his preaching in and at the Market House, as recorded in his Journal, he spared not his voice or inestimable endeavours in the open air, generally at the Linen Hall, in the fine evenings of summer. In the year 1785 John Wesley and Mrs. Siddons were in Belfast at the same time, exercising their respective vocations—both persons of genius, of one of whom it would be unjust to say that “her name was writ in water,” but whose work at best was for the day; while the other is known in every land where the English tongue is spoken, and his followers have made it a power at home and among uncivilised nations abroad almost to the very ends of the earth.

The Methodist Houses of Worship in the town in 1876 amount to seventeen.

There are also now probably not less than twenty other congregations in Belfast, varying as much in the numbers of their worshippers as they do in the opinions which they profess.

There could probably be some inconsiderable additions made to this early theological history of Belfast; and perhaps one or two other much smaller denominations had let their efforts be known before the century closed. But the history of all the important religious bodies has been related as faithfully and as much at large as it has been in the power of the writer to accomplish. The advancement between the record of what the town was respecting them all in the eighteenth century, and the prodigious height which they have reached at the present late period of the nineteenth, is out of all calculation. Every denomination has shown a desire for increased accommodation for their worshippers, and the religious position has now attained in Belfast, so far as the number of its churches and congregations can make it, a high and praiseworthy standard.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## EARLY PRINTING IN BELFAST.

**T**HE first Printing Press that was established in Belfast was that which attended the army of King William to prepare the proclamations and other documents which issued from the camp, or some place near it, during the King's progress through the country. It is not certain that the press was actually put in operation then in this town, the few facts obtained as to its movements not being quite conclusive on that point. It is first announced that, on the 20th of June, 1690, a vessel sailed from Highlake, "on board of which the Printers with all their instruments and materials were embarked." Captain Akerman, writing from Carrickfergus on the 23rd of June to Sir Robert Southwell, Secretary of State at the camp, says—"The Printers cannot move without two waggons;" leading to the opinion that they were then in the country. Again, on the 25th of June, Christopher Carleton, the Collector of Belfast, writes, but it does not appear to whom—

"Your waggons and baggage were I hope last night with you, (yesterday morning the Commissioners of the Great Seal landed at Whitehouse) and I am much concerned what to do with the press. Those gentlemen that manage it tell me now they cannot fix a place in the camp, and besides they expect his Majesty will daily be moving so that they cannot be in order to do any service,—for one day's sudden motion will more disturb and disorder their utensils than in three days can be rectified, so that they are desirous, if his Majesty will please to admit, that they may remain here till his arrival in Dublin. This they desired me signify to you, and as you direct they will observe, either move forward or set up here; therefore I humbly expect your resolution in this affair. The Printers cannot work but in a House."



The preceding letter was also, it is most probable, addressed to Sir Robert Southwell. The printers were at the time either in Carrickfergus or Belfast, the word *here* as coming from Christopher Carleton proving the fact; and they may have made some trials in this town with their ambulatory press. Be that as it may, they were the precursors, but only for a short time, of a fixed printing establishment, which dates from 1694. In that year William Crawford was Sovereign, and induced two practical printers, Patrick Neill and James Blow—or, as is sometimes stated, Neill only, who was accompanied by Blow as his assistant—to settle in Belfast for the exercise of their craft; and farther to encourage them,<sup>1</sup> entered into partnership with them himself.<sup>2</sup> The printing business being thus fairly launched in the town was entered into with commendable activity, so much so as to attract the notice of the Church party. Dr. King, writing to the Archbishop of Canterbury, says that he sends him “three editions which I am assured were printed at Belfast; the first in 1694, the second in 1700, and the last in 1717.” I do suspect they let the frames at Belfast stand unbroken, and print them as they find occasion, as the printers often do with the Almanacks; and in truth there are few books for which they

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<sup>1</sup> Encouragements of a similar kind, or other inducements, were not uncommon at the time, to give the printing press a beginning in places thought suitable for its introduction. We learn, for example, that in 1660 two magistrates of Glasgow encouraged one Robert Saunders to set up a printing office in their town with a pension of £40 a-year, “he to print gratis every thing that the town shall employ him to print.”—*Memorabilia of the City of Glasgow selected from the Minute Books of the Burgh*. Printed for private circulation, 1835. Thus we find Belfast was not so very far behind Glasgow in its early typography. The statement contained in this note and its reference, and also the references regarding the printing press attending King William’s army, are in the *Pinkerton MSS*.

<sup>2</sup> This was very praiseworthy and enterprising conduct on the part of the Sovereign, probably the same William Crawford who was one of the representatives of the town in Parliament in 1703 and 1709, and described as a merchant. No farther notice of him has been obtained except the following incidental observation in the will of Elizabeth Bigger (1694):—“I also leave to my loving son James Smith all that House in Fore Street now in possession of William Craford Esq Sovereigne, reserving the Parlour as it is now for a shop.” This makes it probable that Mr. Crawford resided in High Street, and that even in 1694 occasional changes from parlours to shops were occurring.



have a greater vent." The works here referred to were the *Covenant* and the *Shorter Catechism*. From this the origin of the printing may have been even a year or two earlier than 1694. Many reprints were also issued by Neill not so likely to offend the sensitive nerves of prelacy ; and religious works, adapted to the surrounding population, most generally engaged his early attention. One of the very first of these was the following, a copy of which is still in existence, and so beautiful and perfect as to justify a full description :—

"It is a small volume, each page four inches in length by two and a quarter in breadth : the signatures show that the sheets consist alternately of twelve and six leaves. The Title is 'THE PSALMS OF DAVID IN MEETER. Newly Translated and diligently Compared with the Original Text and former Translations : More plain, smooth, and agreeable to the Text than any heretofore.—Allowed by the Authority of the General Assembly of the Kirk of *Scotland*, and appointed to be sung in Congregations and Families. *Belfast*, Printed by *Patrick Neill and Company*, and Sold at his Shop. 1700.'

"On the blank page facing the Title is written, in a very neat hand, 'David Smith's Gift to Belfast Meeting House 1705.'<sup>1</sup>

"The book is curiously and expensively bound ; the sides of the cover are of tortoise shell, and the back, the hinges, and the corner ornaments of solid silver, with a neatly engraved oval plate of the same metal in the centre of each piece of shell."

Patrick Neill's name only is on the title page, and whether Mr. Crawford or James Blow, or both, formed the other members of the firm is not known.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> David Smith, who presented this beautiful little volume to the Presbyterian Congregation, was Sovereign of Belfast in 1699 and 1700. He was the direct ancestor of George Kennedy Smith, Esq., of Belfast, Solicitor, who is secretary to the same First Congregation at the present day.

<sup>2</sup> At the end of the volume is the following list showing the kind of works in which Patrick Neill and Company generally dealt :—

BOOKS PRINTED AND SOLD BY PATRICK NEILL.

The New Testament of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The Psalms of David in Meeter.

Christ's Famous Titles and a Believer's Golden Chain, handled in divers Sermons ; together with his Cabinet of Jewels, or a Glimpse of Sion's Glory. *By William Dyer.*

Patrick Neill did not long enjoy the privilege of printing books in Belfast, having died about 1705. The tradition in the town always has been that he and Blow were brothers-in-law, which is quite correct, as proved by his will, dated 21st December, 1704, in which, after directing that he shall be interred in Belfast, "as to my brother-in-law James Blow, and Brice Blair<sup>1</sup> shall seem meet," he appoints John Crawford and Charles Anderson of Glasgow his executors, desiring that they shall pay all the debts he owes to any person, "and first to relieve my

Christ's certain and sudden Appearance to Judgment. *By Thomas Vincent.*

The Christian's Great Interest ; or a Treatise of—1st, The Trial of a Saving Interest in Christ. 2nd, The way how to attain it. *By William Guthrie.*

A Most Familiar Explanation of the Assembly's Shorter Catechism. *By Joseph Alleine.*

The Pilgrim's Progress from this World to that which is to Come : Delivered under the Similitude of a Dream. *By John Bunyan.*

A Treatise concerning the Lord's Supper : with three dialogues for the more full Information of the weak in the nature and use of this Sacrament. *By Thomas Doolittle.*

Sacramental Meditations on the Sufferings and Death of Christ. *By Daniel Campbell.*

The Bible the best New-Year's Gift : containing the Contents of the Old and New Testaments in Verse.

A Choice Drop of Honey from the Rock CHRIST.

The Rev. John Scott Porter, sole pastor (1876) of the First Congregation, Rosemary Street, Belfast—to which, 170 years ago, the invaluable little book printed in this town in 1700 was presented—has written the description of it as in the text, and also furnished the list of books represented to have been printed by Patrick Neill.

<sup>1</sup> Brice Blair, mentioned above as the co-executor with James Blow of Patrick Neill, was a public character in the town, at least his name is found in connection with public matters or well-known persons, and frequently occurs in *Presbyterian Loyalty*. It is stated that he was, by the female line, a member of the Brice family. He was agent for the distribution of the Royal Bounty in 1703 ; was a zealous Presbyterian, and described as a bookseller and haberdasher, which might nearly be inferred from his will, which is dated in 1722. He left considerable property, part of which, as stated in the will, consisted of—

"Latin Books to the value of	...	£20	17	8
English Do. to the value of	...	47	4	11½
Shop Goods worth	...	238	19	5 ;"

and other property, amounting in all to several hundred pounds. This will, copied in 1875, affords proof of his occupation.

brother James Blow of all debt he stands engaged for me, and next to pay Mr. Anderson of Edinburgh, who for the good of my children will take books for the debt; and my real and clear estate I order to be equally divided among my children, John, James, and Sarah, and I recommend my son John to the care of my brother Blow to teach him the trade I taught him, and if he keep the printing house in Belfast, to instruct him in that calling.”<sup>1</sup>

The words at the end of this will, “if he keep the printing house in Belfast,” might imply that it had not as yet been attended with any great success. It is proof, however, that it had been some years in operation, and the expression of paying a creditor with books no doubt applied to works of his own production. By the death of Neill, James Blow became the sole printer in Belfast. The division among the Presbyterians which about this time began, and which assumed yearly wider differences, originated a great number of controversial tracts, and as Mr. Blow, siding with the non-subscribers, published their works, another printer had to be obtained to act for the Synod. This was Robert Gardner, who in 1720 became the typographical champion of the orthodox party, and in that year the second printer in Belfast. The class of works issued by them consisted very much of religious and controversial treatises—Presbyterian books in general—for Presbyterian people.”<sup>2</sup> The Church party

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<sup>1</sup> Copied from the original in the Record Office. Dublin (1873).

Mr. Pinkerton has an interesting note regarding one of the descendants of Patrick Neill, the first Belfast printer. He says—“The late well-known naturalist, Patrick Neill, LL.D., of Canonmills, Edinburgh, descended either collaterally or directly from Patrick Neill of Belfast. Dr. Neill cherished with great care a book printed by his ancestor at Belfast, and after his death his niece presented the book to the writer of these lines.”

The name of the book so presented is not mentioned, but there is written on a leaf adjoining the above extract the following:—“Advice for Assurance of Salvation. By Robert Craghead. *Belfast*, Printed and Sold by Patrick Neill. 1702.” This was probably the book presented, or else the “Psalms of David in Meeter,” both among the earliest of Neill’s printed works in this town.

<sup>2</sup> In the *Pinkerton MSS.* are the names of more than 500 books printed or reprinted in Belfast in the eighteenth century, and these can only be but a portion of the entire. Presbyterian readers of the present day might be interested in

also employed Mr. Blow occasionally to print for them in the absence, at the commencement of printing in the town, of any of their own denomination. One work only of this description requires to be named. The entire title page is not inserted, but sufficient of it to make known its import. It is similar in purpose with the translations into Irish of the *Church Catechism* more than a hundred years before in Dublin;<sup>1</sup> but then the one was in an ancient city, the capital of the kingdom; the other in an obscure place in the wilds of Ulster. The Belfast work is styled—

THE  
C H U R C H  
C A T E C H I S M

In Irish with the ENGLISH placed over against it in  
the same *Karakter*.

Belfast : Printed by James Blow 1722.

The printers soon increased besides Blow and Gardner, and throughout the eighteenth century there issued from the Belfast presses several hundred books. Many were originals, but more were reprints, and of the latter the prices were not above a third or even a sixth of those of the same books in London, the fact being sometimes noticed as an inducement to purchasers.

The places where the publishers of those days lived were nearly all in Bridge Street and High Street. Blow's shop was in Bridge Street, as was also that of James Magee, at the Bible and Crown; Henry and Robert Joy were in High Street; John Hay at the Two Bibles; John Ferguson in Rosemary Lane; Robert Smith at the sign of the Gilt Bible at the corner of Bridge Street next High Street. Besides these, several other names are found as dealers in books; and printing, considering

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seeing the titles even of the kind of information supplied to their forefathers. Many of them are, it is presumed, in the Library of the Presbyterian College, Belfast, and are no doubt very well known, at least to those of that communion who have directed their attention to the early history of their church here.

<sup>1</sup> See Gilbert's *History of Dublin*, vol. i., p. 383.

the smallness of the town, and the little advance which had been made in the same direction in very considerable places in England, had certainly reached in Belfast quite a respectable position. It was, as is well understood, no doubt stimulated in the early years of the century by theological strife, and, farther on, by the volunteer movement and great political excitement, which generated a taste for reading and inquiry of the most extended character. Numbers of the books issued by the printers of Belfast towards the end of the century are still to be met with. Many of them were the school-books of the day, historical and other valuable productions, poems, plays, novels, and all the miscellaneous literature of a community rising in a desire for knowledge.<sup>1</sup>

Among the other books produced by James Blow, it has been repeated many times, and has been long received without question, that he printed the Bible in Belfast so early as 1702; that many other editions were printed by him and his son and successor, Daniel Blow, in subsequent years; and that therefore from the press of this town issued the first edition of the Scriptures in Ireland. Of late years all this has been contradicted, on the grounds that no copy of this early edition had ever been seen; also the great unlikelihood that so large a venture would have been made in the very infancy of printing in Belfast; and that at no time during the century were the copies of the Old and New Testaments, apparently printed here in 1751, 1755, and other years, distinct and independent works of the Blows alone, the title page invariably expressing—"Belfast: Printed by and for James Blow: and for George Grierson, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, &c." In favour of the assumption that these Belfast Bibles are made-up works, there is often bound in a volume with the preceding general imprint the New Testament printed at Edinburgh or

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<sup>1</sup> The original old wooden press used by the Blows was in use in Youghal so lately as 1824, and may possibly be still in existence. See Madden's *Periodical Literature*, vol. ii., p. 209.

elsewhere in a different year altogether, or the Apocrypha or Psalms of David, each varying in date.

All these discrepancies have caused much difference of opinion, and considerable controversy in periodicals and newspapers. Those who have bestowed attention on this matter are perhaps not aware that more than business relations existed between the Blows and Griersons. Daniel Blow died in Belfast in 1810, having reached the age of ninety-two, and four years before his death he explained the family connection in a letter from which a few words are here drawn :—"George Grierson married Widow Cromie daughter of James Blow of Belfast, Printer.<sup>1</sup> . . . James Blow about the year 1704 printed the first edition of the Holy Bible in Ireland and many succeeding editions." It is

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<sup>1</sup> The relationship is more explicitly described in the following words :—"George Grierson married Constantia Pilkington a celebrated scholar. She died in 1733 at the age of twenty seven years. after being the mother of a son in 1728 who was called George Abraham Grierson. George Grierson was married again to a daughter of James Blow the celebrated printer of Belfast, a widow named Cromie, by whom he had a son, Boulter Grierson. George Grierson died in 1753 at the age of 74: his eldest son George Abraham died in 1755 in his 27th year." The above is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, founded in part on Gilbert's *History of Dublin*. The relationship between James Blow and George Grierson was thus close, the former being father-in-law of the latter, so that the Bible-printing, as it were in common, had a very natural origin.

The Constantia Grierson above mentioned was a famous classical scholar, and her extraordinary attainments in that direction earned the praise, almost the wonder, of her contemporaries. A short poem written by her was inserted in the *News-Letter* in 1806, and its introduction here is excusable, as there is every probability that it is not much known, as also the connection of Constantia Grierson with an old and noted Belfast family makes it almost appropriate, and as it treats of the glorious art of Printing, the subject now under consideration.

"Hail, Mystic Art ! which men like Angels taught  
To speak to eyes, and paint embodied thought :  
The Deaf and Dumb, blest Skill, relieved by thee,  
We make one sense perform the task of three.  
We see—we hear—we touch the head and heart,  
And take or give what each but yields in part ;  
With the hard laws of distance we dispense  
And, without sound, apart, commune in sense ;  
View, tho' confined—nay, rule this earthly Ball,  
And travel o'er the wide expanded all.  
Dead letters thus with living notions fraught  
Prove to the soul the telescope of thought ;



also not generally known that there is a contract extant—probably one of many—between Blow and Grierson, wherein the former agrees to print for the latter 8000 Bibles in seven years,<sup>1</sup> showing that Grierson was the prime mover in the Bible-printing of the eighteenth century, and that Blow was his partner or subordinate. Besides these facts, there is a curious advertisement so lately as 1776 bearing on the same question. It runs thus—

“Whereas several Printers in this Kingdom have wilfully or through Ignorance published Extracts from, or Abridgements of, several Acts of Parliament passed in Ireland to my manifest Prejudice and Injury as Printer to his Majesty, my Patent confining the sole printing of *Bibles*, *Common Prayer Books*, *Testaments*, *Psalters*, *Protestant Catechisms*, &c., as well as Acts of Parliament either at large or in any part to me, and by it all other Persons are expressly forbid printing them.”

This is signed by the assignee and representative of “the late Boulter Grierson, printer to the King’s most excellent Majesty,” and is a proof of the exclusive right claimed, at least, by that official. He extended the privilege to Blow, his brother printer and family connection, and in a manner united with him in the execution of it.

As the question of the early printing of the Bible in Belfast is still an unsettled one, any conjecture is allowable which may contribute to its elucidation. The explanation here offered will

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To mortal life immortal honour give,  
And bid all deeds and titles last and live.  
In scanty life, Eternity we taste,  
View the first ages, and inform the last :  
Arts, Hist’ry, Laws we purchase with a look,  
And keep, like Fate, all Nature in a Book.”

These lines were written not much less than 150 years ago.

<sup>1</sup> The authority for this is the *Pinkerton MSS*, but no proof or reference is given ; its correctness, however, cannot be questioned.

It may be stated here, with regard to assertions made by Daniel Blow in 1806 regarding events in the previous century, that he may have relied more on memory or tradition than is desirable for rigid proof. One inaccuracy he surely introduces. He says that Patrick Neill died childless, whereas the will already copied mentions by name two sons and a daughter who survived him.

perhaps not be received by many who seem convinced of the truth of the popular statement of what James Blow did as a printer in the infancy of the art in Belfast; but it may at least be considered favourable to his integrity, and to some extent exonerate both James and his son from the imputations that have been cast upon them that the title-pages of the Scriptures were alone their work, all the other parts having been obtained or purchased by them in other quarters. They are both acknowledged to have been men of uprightness, and conceived they were, as occasion offered, justified in representing themselves printers of books, though under the shelter of their official relative. Nor is there any reason to suppose they did not really print the later copies, as their title-pages express. When Patrick Neill printed in 1700 the beautiful copy of the "Psalms of David in Meeter;" when Blow printed the works of David Lindsay in 1714, the Book of Psalms in 1725, and, what has not been before noticed, so far as the writer is aware, *Presbyterian Loyalty*,<sup>1</sup> a heavy quarto volume of 564 pages, in 1713, there is no reason whatever to suppose, on the score of labour and expense, that he might not also have printed at any of these dates the Old Testament or the New Testament. That James and Daniel Blow did so at certain periods, under the sanction and influence of the king's printer, seems a warrantable and reasonable statement; and that they bound up with their own work other portions of the Scriptures, procured elsewhere, and the imprints on which also inform us of their respective origins, is matter of notoriety. A quarto Bible is in Belfast, the title-page of which expresses—"Printed by Charles and Mark Kerr Edinburgh 1793;" and bound up with it is the Apocrypha, on the last page of which appears—"Printed by Daniel Blow, Bridge Street, Belfast, 1778." Mixtures of this sort, or parts of

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<sup>1</sup> There is no Belfast imprint on *Presbyterian Loyalty*, but merely the date 1713. The place of its printing, however, has never been either doubted or questioned, the omission of the imprint having arisen, according to Dr. Reid and others, from Mr. Blow's desire not to run counter too openly against the feelings and wishes of the dominant Church party.

the Bible bound together, from Blow and some other source or sources, are not uncommon in the north of Ireland.<sup>1</sup>

A copy of the Bible with the apparent date of 1702, and represented to have been printed in Belfast by James Blow, has been very recently found. A practical printer in the town has given his opinion that it is a veritable date, and that the book is in all respects genuine. If this could be established it would be an interesting discovery, the received belief, in a general way, hitherto being that the earliest copy of the Protestant Scriptures issued in Ireland was printed in Dublin in 1714. The date of 1702 on this Bible, to an ordinary, even a close examination, appears to be correct; but as it is in Roman capitals, and as there is, under any circumstances, a possibility that the penultimate letter was originally L, the faint or lower line of which has been designedly erased, or else made invisible by use, consequently causing the entire to read 1702, the true date may have been really 1751. In the present case, no matter how positive may be the opinion of a skilled practical printer, or however clear and distinct the figures, reasons against the possibility of 1702 being the correct date, which cannot be refuted by any argument, arise to set it aside. In the *Imperial Dictionary of Universal Bio-*

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<sup>1</sup> The following is a title-page, or rather the title-pages, of a Bible now in Belfast, of one of these motley copies which proceeded from three different sources, and at three different dates, but all bound up in one volume:—

### THE HOLY BIBLE &c.

BELFAST

Printed by and for James Blow : for George Grierson printer to the King's most excellent Majesty at the King's Arms and Two Bibles 11 Essex St. Dublin.

MDCCLI.

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### THE NEW TESTAMENT &c.

EDINBURGH

Printed by Robert Freebairn & Co. his majesty's printers.

MDCXXXI.

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### THE PSALMS OF DAVID IN METRE.

BELFAST

Printed by Daniel Blow in Bridge Street.

MDCCLXXVIII.

*graphy* it is stated that Lord Carteret obtained for George Grierson the appointment of King's Printer, but Lord Carteret was not Lord Lieutenant in 1702, nor for many years after. The fact of Lord Carteret having first given the appointment to Mr. Grierson appears in other printed authorities, but being desirous of obtaining certain proof of it from the present representative of the family, it has, so far as that will establish it, been fully confirmed, the late Mr. Grierson having stated by letter that "Lord Carteret became Lord Lieutenant 22nd August, 1724. He it was who in 1726 gave the Patent first to our family. You must bear in mind that the Patentee who preceded us was at the time still living. Our predecessor seems not to have published Bibles or Prayer Books so far as I know."<sup>1</sup> The Bible recently discovered is imprinted—"Belfast: Printed by and for James Blow, and for George Grierson, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty, at the King's Arms and Two Bibles, in Essex Street, Dublin, MDCCII." This book therefore must have been published when Mr. Grierson was King's Printer, which he was not in 1702; and therefore the proof of this very early Bible-printing in Belfast disappears. This does not affect the printing connection between Blow and Grierson in so many cases subsequently to the time when the latter first entered on his official appointment.

Such is now the state of this rather famous Belfast controversy. There is no direct evidence that James Blow ever printed the Scriptures in Belfast in full at any time at his own risk and on his own responsibility; and none that such were ever printed by him—and that in part only—earlier than 1751; at least that is the oldest known to the writer. Yet well-informed persons, or persons who believe themselves well informed on this question, are still in the habit of saying that he was really the first printer of the Bible in Ireland; that such printing took place in Belfast in 1702, 1704, or 1714—induced to such belief by the strong tradition of its truth among his descendants to this day, and by

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<sup>1</sup> From a letter to the author, dated 23rd February, 1875, from George Abraham Grierson, Esq., Manor House, Malahide, Dublin.

the uncontradicted statement made to the same effect at his death in 1759 in a Dublin newspaper; and that the Bible forms one of a list of books advertised as published and printed by him in 1714. These are all no doubt curious, but they cannot, in the absence of any such Bible, which has never yet been seen, decide the controversy in the affirmative; there is no unimpeachable proof of its truth. The most that can be said is that it remains an open question, even if it be correct to describe it in such terms.

If this very early issue of the Bible in the town cannot, however, be established as a fact, Belfast can claim both distinction and precedence on the score of its early printing, one of the many subjects connected with it on which there is great want of knowledge. "In 1724," says Lord Macaulay, "there were thirty-four counties in England in which there was no printer, one of these counties being Lancashire."<sup>1</sup> At the latter end of the seventeenth century the same eminent authority declares that "the only printing press in England, north of the Trent, was at York." These statements, however, are exaggerations, as it is proved there was printing in Liverpool in 1710; but then there was also printing in Belfast even at an earlier date, on irrefragable testimony—namely, the will of Patrick Neill, written in 1705—and in the existence to this day of books, or at least a book of that era printed here by him. The evidence, therefore, is good that at the end of the seventeenth century, or very beginning of the eighteenth, when printing was all but unknown in the north of England, Belfast had its press. Thomas Gent, the famous printer of York, and indefatigable writer on topographical and local historical subjects, affirms that "in 1714 there were few printers in England; there were none," he says, "in Chester, Liverpool, Whitehaven, Preston, or Manchester."<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See the disproof of this statement in *Notes and Queries*, February, 1875, p. 147.

There were some newspapers also in Belfast of which now no trace can be discovered. According to a statement of the late Mr. Henry Greer, there was one called the *Weekly Register* in 1741, and there was certainly another about 1771 devoted to the subject of the land changes at that era.

<sup>2</sup> This quotation from Gent is on a small scrap of paper in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, and not containing any reference to the work in which it is to be found.

This is rather erroneous, but true with respect to some of these places, and correct in its main statements. Belfast, therefore, has reason to look back with some pride on these facts, and among all the enterprises for which it has obtained reputation there is none more creditable to it than its early practice of the art of printing.

There were many periodicals printed in Belfast in the eighteenth century; according to John Power—an industrious investigator into the subject—about twelve in all, from 1729 to 1866, newspapers not included. They were short-lived, called into existence for particular purposes, and their very names are now forgotten. Three of the newspapers of the last century, from their prominence, alone require to be noticed. The first and most important is the *Belfast News-Letter*, begun in 1737 by Francis Joy, and not by the Messrs. Joy, as is sometimes said. It is still in being, and said to be the oldest provincial paper in Ireland.<sup>1</sup> No entire series of the *News-Letter* from its commencement has been found. The most perfect, it is probable, which is known, is that in the Library of the Society for Promoting Knowledge, in the Linen Hall, Belfast, but even it begins only with No. 152, Friday, 16th February, 1738. What size or appearance the *News-Letter* had during the time in which it had been before the public till February, 1738, cannot now be ascertained, but at that date the publisher announces that he has thought proper to print the paper in larger character, so as to furnish for the future "one whole sheet for the greater conveniency of Advertisements and satisfaction of his Subscribers." That it had been, therefore, up to this time a single leaf cannot be doubted, and that it was a very diminutive leaf is equally certain, the enlarged issue, No. 152, only measuring fifteen inches by nine, margins included. It consists of two leaves of these most inconsiderable dimensions, and contains nine advertise-

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<sup>1</sup> *Notes and Queries*, April 18th, 1874, p. 285, quoting from the *Printer's Register*. But Dr. Madden (*Irish Periodical Literature*, vol. ii., p. 190) mentions a Waterford paper of the year 1729, which, if correct, would displace the *News-Letter* from its provincial supremacy.



ments, which increase in early succeeding numbers to fifteen or sixteen as the general amount. In the Linen Hall collection the first bound volume ends with March, 1739. There are likewise some detached numbers of the years 1746 and 1747, after which there are none till January 2nd, 1749—a blank of about ten years—a sad want which, it is to be hoped, will one day be supplied. The earliest numbers were printed by Francis Joy at “The Peacock” in Bridge Street, showing that printers adopted the practice of the time in distinguishing their places of business by signs. The paper of May 5th, 1747, No. 1008, has on the top, at one side, a rude woodcut of a boy on a galloping horse blowing a horn, emblematic of the manner in which the *News-Letter* was conveyed to the country and the neighbouring towns in the last century; and on the other side of the title another woodcut of a female figure holding a spear and olive branch, possibly representing Hibernia. On the impression of 10th June, 1746, there appears a notice importing that the copy was printed on paper “of his own manufacturing,” but he does not say where, which may have relation to a curious story of Mr. Joy’s multifarious occupations in early life noticed in another place. On October 30th, 1747, the *News-Letter* ends thus—“On Paper manufactured at Randalstown.”

The *News-Letter* continued the property of the family who first began it till 1795, in which year the Mr. Joy of that day bids farewell to his friends and subscribers.<sup>1</sup> He describes the

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<sup>1</sup> The Joy family is one of the most important which has ever been connected with Belfast. There is a will of John Joye of 1711 in the Record Office, but the maker of it was obscure and of small position. Neither it, nor one other in the same place of Edmund Joy of 1694, affords any proof that the important modern family of Joy derived their descent from them. The family claims origin in Belfast “from Captain Thomas Joy who came over in a regiment with the first Sir Arthur Chichester.” Leaving this out of sight, the name of Francis Joy stands on a firm basis, and is deserving of all honour. He was not only the founder of the *News-Letter* in 1737, but the first manufacturer of paper in Ulster, which was established in Randalstown, according to Dr. Cotton, in his *Typographical Gazetteer*, so early as 1748; but in 1746, as expressed in the *News-Letter* itself, the paper was manufactured by Henry Joy. He had two sons, Henry and Robert, the former of whom was father of the great lawyer, the Lord Chief-Baron Joy; and the latter, Robert, noted for the active part which he took in the establish-

paper then as a great and increasing property, printing on 3rd January, 1794, 2975 impressions, and on July 4th of the same year, 3225 copies. It was disposed of to a Scotch firm, and the subscribers are informed that Mr. George Gordon will henceforth conduct the paper "in the rear of the shop lately occupied by Mr. Joy;" and to make Mr. Gordon's entrance on his new office more memorable, he mounts, on the 1st of June, 1795, the arms of the town at the head of the *News-Letter*, where they have ever since continued to appear. It so went on through 1796 and 1797, varying in the latter year to the simple announcement of being printed in High Street. On 13th April, 1798, it is first printed, and his friends have said altogether managed, by Mr. Ebenezer Black; in 1801 Mr. James Blair became the publisher, and it bears his name till 1804.

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ment of the Poorhouse, and for being mainly instrumental in introducing the cotton manufacture within its walls and within the province, the advantages of which to Scotland he had witnessed with a discerning eye. He was also a zealous promoter of the Volunteer movement; and no two inhabitants of Belfast were ever more justly honoured and esteemed by their fellow-citizens than Henry and Robert Joy. A silver cup, still in possession of the family, was presented to the former by the inhabitants of Belfast in 1788, the inscription on which records the gratitude of the donors for the innumerable services rendered to his fellow-citizens by the recipient. The letters of Henry Joy to his son, the future Chief-Baron, when at the Middle Temple, corroborate the truth of the language on the testimonial, indicating strong good sense, integrity, earnestness, and benevolence.

It is unnecessary to lengthen this short notice by mentioning more recent members of this family or their connections. They retain the position which they have long reached, and are still owners of property in the town. They did not appear in the seventeenth century as public characters, participating in corporate affairs, but there is a notice regarding them in the Records of that period which is evidence of the rank held, at least, by some of the name. "John Joy or Jay, a residenter in Belfast, about 79 years of age, born at Seabee in Yorkshire, an elder brother of Sucklin Joy of the estate of Helveston four miles from Norwich; when 16 years of age joined Cromwell's army and came to Ireland; wishes now to settle Helveston on George Joy born in the Minorities, son of George Joy brother of John. The Sovereign certifies that he is an ancient and honest inhabitant of Belfast." This is dated 1698, but is rather obscure.

Dr. Madden says, in the *United Irishmen and their Times*, vol. ii., p. 391, that "Francis Joy was originally a conveyancer and notary public, and established the *News-Letter* in consequence of a printer who had been in his debt giving up his establishment to him;" but whether this be true or not, the establishing of the *News-Letter*, the paper manufacture, the cotton, and all their other proceedings, make the name one of those to which Belfast is largely indebted.

A noteworthy circumstance may be referred to in connection with the *News-Letter* and one of the persons mentioned in the foregoing list, though not more, perhaps, than as affording a contrast between past and present times. It is a licence costing five pounds from the Commissioners of Stamps, empowering Ebenezer Black, of McKittrick's Entry, to keep four printing presses and types for printing a paper at his house in Exchange Alley in Belfast, and in no other place whatsoever, for one year, from 25th March, 1798.

The volumes of the *News-Letter* in the Library are the property of W. B. Joy, Esq., of London, but it is hoped they never will be removed from their present place of deposit. The fly-leaves of many of them are covered with notes in the handwriting of Henry Joy, referring to those parts of the contents which he deemed most interesting. This paper has now had a course of 140 years. It was published from the first twice weekly, and long so continued; and old as it is, its present high circulation and standing promise a length of days far beyond the ordinary term of newspaper existence.

To preserve a farther record of the *News-Letter*, it may be mentioned that its present ownership is now of longer continuance even than that of the Joys. Mr. Alexander Mackay became proprietor in July, 1804, and it is still the property of his descendants. They first printed it tri-weekly, and in July, 1855, it appeared as a daily paper. It is not now issued from Exchange Alley or "The Peacock" in Bridge Street, but from a spacious office in Donegall Street.<sup>1</sup> The newspaper press of

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<sup>1</sup> There is a rather curious notice respecting the origin of the *News-Letter* in the *Letters between Henry and Frances*, a lively production in two volumes, published about 1774, and in which are these words in one of the letters of Henry:—"I send you a Paper published here (Belfast). It was first set on foot and established by a tailor in this town, who, by mere dint of genius, made the types, the ink, the paper, and the press. He has retired upon an easy fortune, and has resigned the business to his son. A tailor and literature! But this is a keen air, which perhaps may sharpen wit as well as appetite. There are two well wrote parallels in it. Our stupid *Leinster Journal* broke at 8s. a year subscription; and this man has made a fortune at 4s. But indeed they read more in the north than in the south. I have met with twenty booksellers' shops on this

Belfast is on an extensive scale, but any notice of it, however deserving of commendation, or of the many newspapers which have existed in the town during the present century, would be outside the present subject.

The *Belfast Mercury, or Freeman's Chronicle*, began in the year 1783, and was the professed advocate of the volunteer body. It was printed by John Tisdall & Co. Tisdall was a bookseller and printer, whose place of business in 1793, and most probably also when the paper began, was opposite the Exchange. He was the presumed editor, but the real editor is said to have been Amyas Griffith.<sup>1</sup> The *Mercury* assumed lofty pretensions, declaring as

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circuit, and there is not one from Dublin to Cork." The insignificance of the *News-Letter* at first, when in the hands of Francis Joy, is visible enough, but what truth, if any, there may be in the above would be difficult to guess. Horace Twiss, in his *Tour in Ireland*, p. 78, quotes the above passage, but erroneously makes Mr. Magee, the Belfast printer and publisher, the performer of all these miracles, instead of the originator of the *News-Letter*. Twiss takes the opportunity of commending Magee's printing, saying, "There have been printed in Belfast by one James Magee a few Books in a much neater manner than in any other part of Ireland, both as to the beauty of the types and the fineness of the paper."

<sup>1</sup> Amyas Griffith was a well-known person in Belfast in the last century. His writing of the *Letters between Henry and Frances* is not anywhere distinctly stated; it is sometimes said the production mentioned is chiefly the work of Mrs. Griffith, his wife, but that he was the principal writer is much more probable. Correct particulars concerning Griffith have been obtained from a work of his published in 1789. He was Excise Surveyor of Belfast, and acquired some reputation among the brewers of the town, and with Lord Donegall also, in consequence of his establishing the Lagan duty, as it was called, on English beer and porter coming into Belfast, as well as on that which was made in the district of Lisburn, and for which service the home brewers presented him with a silver cup. His leisure occupation was literary; he had a private printing press and types. In 1785 Mr. Portis, Lord Donegall's agent, proposed to him to set up "a noble printing office in the town, establish a newspaper, and that plenty of cash would be given him to carry it on." Nay; "Mr. P.," he says, "went further, for he commissioned me to agree for the purchase of the *News-Letter* or *Mercury*, and that the money should be forthcoming. Mr. J. (Joy) I never applied to, and upon Mr. T.'s (Tisdall) asking £2000 for the *Mercury* Mr. P. thought it better to purchase everything new, and I coincided with him, as I knew I could set up a newspaper for £200 or less." The above is copied from *Miscellaneous Tracts by Amyas Griffith*, p. 18. Griffith, after all, was a weak politician; he took up the cause of Waddell Cunningham in his contested election for Carrickfergus from personal pique, lost his situation in consequence, was reduced to immediate distress, and obliged to sell his property and plate, even the cup above mentioned, and the painting of the "Adelphy Group" or *literati* of Belfast, to supply his

its motto or aim that while there was a "Grievance to complain of or an Enemy to conquer it would be the paper of the People of Ireland." Some politicians might say that this was a claim to perpetual existence. Before it could accomplish these desirable objects, it earned the animosity of the Government, and ceased in 1786. It thus lived only through three of the most stirring years of the Volunteers, supporting the views of that famous association, conducted with some ability, and containing much, during its short reign, in advertisements, communications, and political articles, to interest the inquiring reader at this day.

A much more important Belfast newspaper was the *Northern Star*. It began in January, 1792, was originated by United Irishmen, and was the undoubted organ of their opinions and the advocate of their claims. There were twelve proprietors, all Belfast men, and all Presbyterians. Samuel Neilson was the chief and largest proprietor, having thirteen shares out of the forty at £50 each, or £2000, which constituted the stock of the company. Mr. Neilson was manager and editor; but he had many contributors, and the principles advocated by the *Star* were those, it may be said, of the ablest political writers in the country. The printer and proprietors were prosecuted in 1792, but acquitted; again in 1794, when Rabb, the printer of the *Star*, was found guilty, and the proprietors acquitted. In 1796 the office was taken possession of by Government authority, persons connected with the paper were seized, sent to Dublin, and kept in prison for many months. In 1797 its final suppression took place, the account of which transaction is in these few words in the handwriting on the paper in the Linen Hall Library—"This was the last No. published, as a mob of Militia next day with non. com. officers broke into the office and destroyed forms,

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urgent wants. It is evident, however, he was competent to have produced the *Letters of Henry and Frances*, as well as to have edited the *Mercury*; and his occupation before he came to Belfast—that of Inspector-General of Munster—might almost be inferred from various allusions in the *Letters*. He mentions many productions which he had written; and the numerous references in his *Miscellaneous Tracts* to Belfast people in 1785, his remarks about the newspapers of the town and his own printing press, are all of much interest.



letters, and every thing they could find, and threw them out in the street."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A more circumstantial account of this event was given to me many years ago by an old and respected gentleman, now deceased, who was connected with the press, and resident in Belfast at the time of this extinction of the *Star*. He says—"I remember the day that the *Star* was wrecked. The day previously they had inserted a paragraph complaining of some arbitrary or domineering conduct on the part of the Monaghan Militia, then quartered in the town, or rather, I believe, of some of the officers. Next morning a file of the regiment marched from the Barracks, entered the office unceremoniously, walked up stairs, took possession of every room above as well as below. The workmen were dreadfully alarmed, and fled in every direction; one young man leaped out of a back window, alighted on a dunghill, and escaped. The soldiers now had possession, and commenced the work of destruction. They had brought with them a hatchet, and began with it to *hag* the face of the types, rendering the whole of the form useless. Not content with this, they threw full cases of types from the upper windows into the entry (Wilson's Entry, where the *Northern Star* was printed, and the same house in which the *Chronicle* was afterwards established and printed). Messrs. Doherty and Simms, two journeymen from the *News-Letter*, purchased the remains of the wreck of the *Northern Star*, and commenced the printing and bookselling." Such was the summary mode of prosecuting the alleged undue licentiousness of the press in Belfast in 1797.

Another version of the motives of the militiamen for committing this outrage has been current. Many of them had joined the United Irishmen, and for this four of the number, after a trial by court-martial, were shot at Blaris Moor; the others were pardoned. The men, irritated at their position, or inflamed with a desire to exhibit that zeal common to recent converts, caused a short paper to be written almost exculpatory of their own conduct and that of their dead comrades, throwing the blame of their misleading on the rebellious or disaffected place in which they were stationed. They tendered this for insertion in the *Star*, where it was refused, the editor thinking that it conveyed an untrue imputation on the character of the town. The men were dissatisfied at this, and wreaked their vengeance on the office in the manner which has been stated.

Even the preceding may not be all that could be wished for of the last days of the *Northern Star*. A few words more, obtained from the publication itself, and therefore likely to be more strictly correct, will in consequence be excused. In the first volume in the Linen Hall Library is the deed of partnership, printed on a detached slip, with the signature of each proprietor appended in his own handwriting. On the 3rd February, 1797, there is a small printed paper, stating that "in consequence of the *Star* office being taken possession of this morning by Colonel Barber, a King's messenger, and Military Guard, the Proprietors of the Newspaper have it not in their power to publish this Day. For this disappointment of their numerous friends and readers they are sincerely sorry; and so soon as this restraint of Government permits them to resume the regular publication of the Paper, the Public may rely on being regularly supplied with it on the accustomed plan."

Another printed slip, dated 10th February, 1797, says—"In addition to the



Such is a brief outline of the more than five years' career and the forcible suppression of the *Northern Star*. It had, like the *News-Letter*, been published twice in the week, and its sale is stated to have amounted to above 4000 copies when its types and materials were scattered. The proprietors of the *Star* afterwards endeavoured to obtain compensation by law for this outrage, but the times were not favourable for them, and it appears that their claims were unheeded, or, at any rate, were unsuccessful.

The *Mercury* and the *Northern Star* are also both in the Library of the Society for Promoting Knowledge in Belfast. The latter contains papers from Theobald Wolfe Tone, the Rev. Sinclair Kelburn, the Rev. Mr. Porter of Greyabbey, and various others. Its political articles are, of course, quite in the advanced spirit of the times.

Of the old Almanacks of Belfast a few words must be said. The advertisement of the oldest one which is known, and that but imperfectly, is expressed—"The Belfast and Poor Robin's Almanack for 1753, Calculated for the New Style. H. & R. Joy." Almanacks were regularly published from this date, it is probable, but no complete or uninterrupted series can be found in

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Information already communicated to the Public, the Friends of the *Northern Star* are respectfully informed that the Military Guard which was placed on the office on the 3rd inst. was removed on Tuesday last about 3 o'clock, when a part of the Types and Printing Materials were carried off by a King's messenger who arrived here the preceding evening." And on a third slip, dated February 17th, 1797, are these words—"The Proprietors were in expectation that they would have been enabled to have Published the Paper to-day and thereby to have gratified the wishes of their numerous Friends, but some late steps having rendered their old Printer and Publisher incompetent for that Department *at present*, and the Law's Delay having prolonged the swearing in of a NEW ONE, they are unavoidably obliged to defer its publication for a few days longer."

It was resumed on 20th February, 1797, and continued till the 19th of May following, when the outbreak of the militia, as related in the text, took place, and the words describing it are written on the last paper.

The allusions in the last slip are probably to John Rabb, who was then in confinement, and consequently could not be either printer or publisher *at present*. He was one of the proprietors, and the printer of the *Star*, though a few numbers at the first were printed by John Tisdall, and some at the last by T. A. Corbitt, High Street.

the possession of any collector. Odd numbers of the last century are not uncommon, but are without local information. That for 1772 is described as "much improved and enlarged, and the most complete Almanack ever published." The Belfast Almanack was always esteemed, and so high was its repute, that in towns in the west of Scotland travelling chapmen might have been heard calling it out for sale as soon as it could be procured from the town in which it was printed.

An Almanack for the use of the Earl of Donegall in 1666 is referred to in the Family Expenditure Roll of that year. In *Notes and Queries* (August 7th, 1875, p. 101) an Almanack of the year 1678 is mentioned. It is described as two and a-half inches long, one and two-fifths broad, bound in shagreen, with handsome silver clasps. Lord Donegall's Almanack, bought for a shilling, has been plainer than this. It was, of course, not a Belfast Almanack, but was of earlier date than that above described, which is considered one of the most precious objects in the museum in which it is placed. There is much to be learned respecting the old Almanacks of Belfast, and a copy of the entire from the commencement would be almost as valuable as the lost *News-Letters*.

The preceding is but an abridgment of the history of Early Printing in Belfast, which, from the days of Patrick Neill till the year 1800, including notices of the books issued and the printers of them, would be full of variety and local interest.

#### EARLY EDUCATIONAL ESTABLISHMENTS IN BELFAST.

So early as the year 1647, occasional notices appear in the *Corporate Records* of the appropriation of some small portion of the cesses raised in the town for the support of the schoolmaster. This acquires more certain form in 1648 or 1650, the exact time being, from the irregular entries, not easily determined; but in one of those years it was agreed at the Court of the Sovereign and Burgesses that "there shall be a constant yearly stipend of £10 allowed by the Town for the

maintenance of a Schoolmaster for the education and bringing up of youth." They include in the same order that means shall be taken "for a convenient house or chamber for the Schoolmaster to inhabit, and a convenient school house to teach in, and for the raising of the money during these troublesome times that there be from quarter to quarter a cess imposed upon the inhabitants of the Town." Considering the impoverished condition in which the town then was, and how imperfectly the word "troublesome" described its real state, this order for the education of youth was very creditable to the governing body. There is no account in the *Records* of the progress made by this school, or any farther reference to it, but there is every likelihood that it was set on foot in some form in or about the year 1650.

When the Commonwealth and Protectorate Governments came into power, as they had established or supported ministers for the religious instruction of the people, so they also formed schools in many places and paid the teachers. The localities of these schools, the names of the teachers, and the salaries which they received, are frequently met with in the papers of the period. In 1654 James Blythe was teacher in Belfast, and in 1655 John Cornwall, the payment in each case from the Government being £20 a-year. In 1657, when the Commissioners were holding an Inquisition in the town of Antrim on the condition and means of support of the churches of the country, they extended their inquiries to the schools, concerning which they make a report at considerable length. It is of much interest, but no part of it is particularly local, except the following:—"The said Jurors say that there are four Protestant schoolmasters now Mayntayned by Sallary from the Commonwealth in the severall Townes of Carrickfergus, Belfast, Antrim, and Lisnegarvie, but how much each of them, the saide Schoolemasters, receave they know not."<sup>1</sup> They farther say "that there were noe Almshouses or Hospitalls in the said County or any revenue or yearly maintinance belonging unto any such House." Also, "that they know not of any

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<sup>1</sup> Cromwellian Papers, Birmingham Tower. Favoured by Mr. Prendergast.

Popish Schoolemaster or any Popish Schoolemistress that kept a Schoole within the saide County of Antrim."

Laudable efforts were thus apparently originated by the Protectorate Government in furtherance of education for a certain class in Belfast and other places, and observations were made and left on record by the Commissioners regarding objects of similar character.<sup>1</sup> They seem not to have been aware, or do not mention, that in 1657 John Cornwall was still schoolmaster in Belfast, and that his salary had been increased to £30 per annum, while that of John Haslam, "Schoolemaster at Lisnegarvie," was no less than £40 a-year—both very liberal payments.

But not less praiseworthy in the same way was the conduct of the first Earl of Donegall when royalty was restored, and his own power restored with it. In what year he established the School of Belfast is not known, but probably in 1665 or 1666, as it appears from the great Family Roll the building was completed or in progress at that period. It stood at the Church, from which circumstance the present Church Lane acquired the name of School-house Lane, and is frequently so called in old documents. No information is known informing us of the exact spot on which the school-house stood, but in the map of 1685 there is a considerable building at the Ann Street corner, and within the yard, which must be the place. This school-house was the edifice which the Roman Catholic officers demanded for the celebration of divine service in 1688, and which the Corporation, as has been related, alleged they could not grant, as it was the property of Lord Donegall, and was then supported by his heirs. Its progress or prosperity is not perfectly known, but it

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<sup>1</sup> One of these probably points to the original seat of the Diocesan School. At any rate, these words are in the Report of the Commissioners—"And the said Jurors say that by virtue of the Statute 12th Elizabeth directing a Free Schoole to be erected and kept in every Diocese, there was before the late Rebellion a free Schoole kept in the Towne of Carrickfergus and the Schoolemaster receaved about £27 yearly one third parte of which charge was to be defrayed by the Bpp. of the Diocese and the other two partes by the Persons (? Parsons) Vicars and other pastors out of the episcopal livings within the said Diocese, and know not of any other free schoole within the said Co. or of any schoole house erected or any Landes assigned for such use."

was the same public school which is often noticed in the next century as one of the institutions of the town. From its supposed suitability for the purpose to which the officers desired to apply it, and from the notices which occur regarding it in the expenditure roll at the time of its erection, no doubt can be entertained that it was a large building. The entries regarding it in the roll are numerous.

“1666. Paid the masons and carpenters for working at the School House *in the Church Yard*.”

“Paid for 42,600 Bricks used at the School.”

Lathing, plastering, slating, a turret clock, are all mentioned at intervals in connection with the school-house.

“1666. Paid Mr. Waring £52 for timber for the School House, and £1 15s. 0d. for 2500 slates to finish the School House.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The means of support, or a portion thereof, of the school-house in the Church-yard, as above specified, consisted of an endowment of £40 a-year “for the use of the schoolmaster,” and a yearly sum for repairs to be derived from the lands of Dunmurry and the rectorial tithes thereunto belonging. This £40 lapsed or ceased with the extinction of the school.

The history of this old School of Belfast is worthy of a farther note. To most of the inhabitants the mention of it will be entirely new. Mr. Henry Joy, one of the very few who had a desire to preserve the ancient history of Belfast, thus writes of it in February, 1818, in an article relative to the Chichester family, drawn forth by festivities in the town on the occasion of the coming of age of the present Marquis of Donegall :—“Among other matters the first Earl established a Classical School in Belfast in which he made provision for the education of poor scholars. It existed till within 35 or 40 years, and in it most of the Gentlemen of Belfast were educated by a succession of teachers, closing with the Rev. Nicholas Garnet and the Rev. Matthew Garnet his son. One of the early fruits of the free department of the establishment was the promotion of Mr. Claudius Gilbert to a Fellowship in Trinity College. He preached his first sermon in the Church of Belfast in 1695, and was appointed Parish Minister in the following year but died during the succeeding one.” The connection of the Gilberts with the town has been related in the Episcopal Ecclesiastical History. Mr. Joy seems not to have been acquainted with it. At the same time, it is correct to say that the younger Gilbert was educated in the Belfast School, and may have preached his first sermon in the church adjoining, neither of which facts would be at all at variance with the true history of himself and his father with the town and the church.

The last notice which has been found of this school is the following from the Donegall Estate Book :—

“1788, Aug. 18th. Paid the Rev. Wm. Bristow as a donation from the Earl of Donegall to the Daughters of the late Rev. M. Garnett £34 2s. 6d.” The £40 was paid regularly, as appears from the same authority, in preceding years.



The Earl of Donegall made, about the same time, another important movement in an educational direction. In 1662 he established a Mathematical Lectureship in Trinity College, Dublin, and endowed it, out of the lands of Magheramorne, with an annual income of £30. The payment was made for a long period without any benefit, so far as is known, to Belfast, though such was the original intention. It seems at last to have been discontinued, and in 1750 the College instituted proceedings for its restoration. On investigation it appeared that no payment had been made for thirty-three years, or since 1717. The arrears, therefore, amounted to £990.<sup>1</sup> Considerable legal discussion arose as to the extent of Lord Donegall's liability, and whether all the conditions of the original grant had been complied with on the part of the College, one of which was to ascertain if any scholars from Belfast had been privately taught; another, if any had been admitted to scholarships; and to enforce the claim or right of a scholar from Belfast to be preferred to the Lectureship. The whole finally ended with a proposal to pay the stipend for the future, upon a person being appointed with Lord Donegall's approbation to do the duty of the office, and upon the engagement of the College to perform the conditions of the grant. The College thus made good their arguments. It does not appear whether the large arrear was recovered; it was most probably not; but the yearly income of £30 was restored, and is paid at this day to Trinity College by Lord Donegall's agent in Belfast. Though the sum is now small, it was a very good allowance two centuries ago. This town derives no benefit from it, which is a departure from its

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<sup>1</sup> This information has been picked out and condensed from a bundle of old law papers bearing on the subject in the *Pinkerton MSS.* In another law document the year mentioned as that in which this Lectureship was founded is stated to have been 1668, and that it was to be called "The Lecture of the Foundation of Arthur Earl of Donegall, who appointed Dr. Myles Symner to be the first lecturer, and after his Lordship's death the Lecturer to be chosen by the College, they leaving notice thereof at the Castle of Belfast, after the vacancy of the said place." The fact of the present payment of this long-established £30 a-year to Trinity College has been communicated by James Torrens, Esq.



first design; and it might be a fair subject of inquiry to learn if any change or improvement could be made in its application. This small lectureship is held at present (1874) by the Rev. W. Roberts, M.A.

The Presbyterians also as a body were not neglectful of education, and both in Down and Antrim high-class schools were formed for the preliminary or entire preparation of candidates for the ministry. There was no such school in Belfast, but individual efforts were not altogether wanting, showing an inclination to further ministerial education. The only notice of this kind which it is necessary to mention is contained in the will of John Johnston, of New Forge, in the County of Antrim, at the beginning of the last century, who desires in that document that all his property, which was very considerable, "should come and fall into the hands of the Ministers and Elders of the Meeting Houses of Belfast and Lisnegarvie, to be disposed off for the education of young Schollers fitt for the ministry, as also for the encouraging and propagating the GossPELL in other parts of this Kingdom where Maintainances are wanting." This is merely a proof that a want was early felt of home education. Right heirs appeared, however, with reference to Mr. Johnston's funds; the "young Schollers" were deprived of the benefit of his bequest; and it was not till the present century that the home education of the Presbyterian clergy was realised in Belfast, and is now on a scale inferior, perhaps, to none in the world.

The Latin Schoolmaster of Belfast is frequently mentioned, and sometimes in alliance with his other office, that of Curate of the Church. They were not always clerks, as in the month of March, 1739, one Wills, "formerly Latin Schoolmaster," advertises that he has taken a shop next door to the Post-office, and opposite the Stone Bridge. The difference in manner from the present day is very observable, as, some years indeed after 1739, the Rev. Mr. Garnet, with the scholars belonging to the Latin School—undoubtedly that in the churchyard—waited on Lord Donegall, when one of them addressed his lordship in a Latin oration, "to which his lordship returned a very obliging

answer in the same language." Their relations were not always so agreeable, as in 1754 the following advertisement respecting the school appears :—

"The Earl of Donegall at the request of a great part of the principal inhabitants of the town of Belfast has at a great expense put the School House in repair, and brought to town the Rev. Nich. Garnet and appointed him Schoolmaster for the Town. The Earl and his Trustees have heard that some of the inhabitants do send their children to other schools. They have ordered me to acquaint the Inhabitants, as well as their other Tenants in the Neighbourhood, that they are not pleased with such treatment, and hope they will not be laid under the necessity of taking notice of any individual who shall continue to do so.

"JOHN GORDON, Agent."

It will be understood that this was not issued by the same Earl who spoke so readily the Latin tongue, but his uncle and predecessor, of imbecile character. This proclamation referred to the school founded in the town by the first Earl, and which had continued till this time under the protection of the family, though probably destitute of its early importance. New educational establishments were constantly arising, and a sole possession of the training of the youth of Belfast, particularly when united with a dictatorial tone, soon came to be as much at variance with the spirit of the age as with general progress.

The year after this warning or threatening manifesto was issued, David Manson, the famous schoolmaster of Belfast, makes his presence first known. He was born in the parish of Cairncastle, near Larne, and the tradition is that he was originally a brewer in this town, to which his advertisement lends some countenance. "October 17th, 1755. David Manson at the request of his *Customers* having opened an Evening School at his House in Clugston's Entry teacheth, by way of Amusement, English Grammar, Reading, and Spelling at a moderate Expense." Another advertisement in 1760 shows that he had enlarged his establishment, and is more explicit in developing his method of

teaching. He informs the public that he has taken a front house in High Street, and "will teach to spell, read, and understand the English Tongue without the Discipline of the Rod by inter-mixing pleasurable and healthful exercise with Instruction." His project was successful, and led to further advance, as in 1768 he again advertises, "that children and youth are boarded and taught the English language by David Manson at his House in Donegall Street which is large and commodious, being built on purpose, where there is a healthful air and delightful prospect of land and water." For the amusement of his pupils they were admitted to the Linen Hall<sup>1</sup> "off Market Hours;" they had a bowling-green near the town; and, finally, he invented for their gratification a machine called the flying coach. The name of David Manson, who has now been dead above eighty years, is still remembered in Belfast as that of the wise and judicious schoolmaster, though he does not seem to have attempted any of the higher branches of education. His elementary educational works—so well compiled, with such knowledge of childish thought—were in universal favour over almost the whole province for a long series of years, are still known, and in use, despite all modern improvements. Manson in his teaching was one of the first who acted on the true principle of making instruction pleasurable, and totally devoid of every feeling of dislike or irksomeness. One of his rewards was the pleasure of amusement on the flying coach. The modern inhabitants of Belfast have never heard of David Manson, but his fame as a teacher, and his reputation for ingenuity and usefulness,

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<sup>1</sup> This Linen Hall in Donegall Street was the earlier one where the church now is. Manson's house was lower down in the street, and on the opposite side. It was long occupied, it is said, as the Provincial Bank in this century. "The delightful prospect of land and water" from it may seem strange to Donegall Street people, their street rapidly becoming one of the greatest thoroughfares in the town; but when inclined to question its accuracy, let them ponder on the manifold and indescribable changes which a century has produced. Donegall Street when David Manson wrote was New Street in every sense of the term. So great was David Manson's reputation as a teacher, that it is said by Mrs. Mattear in a letter that the young Lord Templetown of the latter end of the last century was a boarder with him in Donegall Street.

are none the less, though all have long ceased to exist who could speak of him from personal knowledge.

The Belfast Academy was opened in the year 1786. Dr. Crombie was the first head master. A sum of about £1000 was collected for establishing the Academy, and subsequently some additional contributions. Previously to this—in 1770—Mr. Arthur Maxwell had bequeathed £1300 for the purpose of assisting Presbyterian congregations in the north of Ireland in educating young men for the ministry, which was the original design of the Academy. Much of the funds were lost by litigation, and even if such had not happened, no adequate amount seems ever to have been raised to effect the purpose of a collegiate establishment. Dr. Crombie did not long enjoy the mastership, having died in 1790, when Dr. William Bruce was appointed, who presided over the Academy for a great number of years, establishing it as the first school in Ulster, and indirectly effecting the object originally intended by diffusing classical knowledge over the province. The building in recent years has gone greatly to decay, but it is likely now to renew its youth. The large space of ground which it occupies has become of great value; its sale is contemplated, and a new Belfast Academy is to be instituted in another locality in keeping with the age and the vast town which has arisen since 1786.

Having had the privilege of examining the books of the Academy from its formation till the year 1834, many entries occur which would well deserve notice did they come within prescribed limits. One only in the last century cannot be overlooked, being strong evidence of the licence to which boys in past times aspired. The details occupy no less than four closely-written pages of a large book, so that full justice cannot be done to the subject in a few words. It appears that on the morning of the 12th of April, 1792, eight youths, who were boarders, and one or two day scholars, took possession, about half-past six o'clock in the morning, of the mathematical school-room, shut themselves up in it, and declared war against the Principal and Patrons of the Academy till certain privileges

were granted to them ; that they had, in view of a serious conflict, abstracted from the kitchen of the house a quantity of hung beef, out of the pantry some roast beef and fourteen loaves, and that they had provided themselves with five pistols, and powder and ball unlimited. They were thus victualled and armed for a lengthened siege. They discharged several volleys from their pistols, the balls from which very nearly struck two or three individuals. Smiths were called in to break open the door, and slaters to ascend the roof to pour water down the chimney to extinguish the fire in the room : both were deterred and driven off by the threats and balls of the insurgents inside. When the Sovereign, the Rev. William Bristow, was required to interpose his magisterial authority to quell the insurrection, he was told to beware, or the boys would put a ball in his wig. Several written communications passed between the besiegers and the besieged, the latter heading their first despatch " Liberty Hall," and laying down in due form their conditions for surrender. They capitulated at night, after making an uproar entirely unexampled either in the Belfast Academy or any other, and which continued the entire day.

The Academy in its now ruined state conveys a melancholy impression to those who were schoolboys there in the early years of this century. The common hall—as lately seen by one of those boys, the seat of learning and duty, crowded every Saturday with bright young faces, Dr. Bruce coming in followed by the attendant masters to give each youth a record of his proficiency and conduct through the week—had become a filthy stable, actually filled with great waggon horses ; and all the schoolrooms were equally disfigured, their glories and their griefs, their old associations, gone for ever to oblivion.



## THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY LOCAL TOKENS OF BELFAST.

A proof of the standing of Belfast during the Protectorate and the early years of the reign of Charles the Second is derived from the number of Local Tokens issued by persons in the town during those periods. That there should have been some of such evidences of traffic was to be expected, but when it is found that a greater number originated here than in any other place in Ireland, except Dublin, it proves an amount of business greatly in favour of the early importance of the town. There are known, reckoning original tokens, and counterparts of a few of them of different date, about thirty in all of the seventeenth century. They were the copper change of the time, called forth when the Government did not provide the necessary coinage for the public requirements, and are an extremely suggestive department of local history.

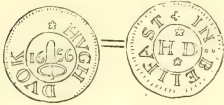
They are here engraved, beginning with that of George Macartney, both because of his general distinction, and that the token is really one of those on which is impressed the oldest distinct date which is known on any of them. It was issued in the year 1656, and the coin is



almost as clear and sharp in outline as when it was first put into circulation. The name is stamped Miccartnay, which is peculiar, and as if the spelling were unsettled or optional. The earliest mode in which it was spelled was M'Cartney; but it is said that when James, the son of the issuer of this token, obtained his patent as judge, it was found that in that document the name was written in error Macartney, in which form, rather than make any alteration, it has ever since remained. There is another token of the same issuer of the following year, 1657, in which the spelling of the name again varies, being Micartney. It is, like that here engraved, without any distinctive symbol, but has the Christian name George in full. The several tokens described being here engraved and open to examination, it is unnecessary to enter into any extended description of all the symbols or



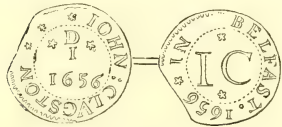
characters impressed upon them; otherwise it is usual to mention every mark, however minute, as evidences of additional or varying coinages.



The next token is that of Hugh Dvok, the Sovereign who is represented to have been unable to write his name, and the father-in-law of

Thomas Pottinger. It also is dated 1656, is the first which has the symbol of the bell, and, as well as the token of George Macartney, spells the name of the town *Bellfast*.

“Iohn Clvgston, 1656.” This token is clear, distinct, and in excellent preservation, but destitute of any symbol. The name



of Clugston was a very well known one in Belfast for a long period. John Clugston was Sovereign of the town in 1727, one of the active political characters of

the day, and probably the son or grandson of him of the same name who issued this early token.



The next token is that of “Iohn Steward.” It was, like the three preceding, also of the year 1656, and is the first that is distinguished by the

ship and bell. It is in excellent condition.

This is also “Iohn Stewart,” and if issued by the same person as the last the name is differently spelled, the final letter not being identical. It is most probably one



of the same individual, notwithstanding this slight difference of a letter. It is in good condition, but the date is not perfectly distinct,

though it is thought to be 1657. This token is remarkable as being the earliest on which a motto is impressed. It has on the reverse, “The Armes of Balfast,” with the ship; and on the obverse the bell. They prove that, if no arms were officially granted at the time, the phrase at least was not unknown, and

that the two symbols represented were considered appropriate for the purpose. This is the earliest use of such words in conjunction with the objects named in any place, so far as has been discovered, saving the reference in Henry Le Squire's will in 1643. They afford tangible evidence that they have been known in some form as the "Armes of Belfast" since the time of John Stewart. It is somewhat curious that the name of the town on this token is spelled *Balfast*, as if still an unsettled point.

This is "George Martin of Belfast, Marchant." It was, when formerly described,<sup>1</sup> supposed to be dated 1637. That, however, was an error, 1657 being the date, though the distinguishing figure is difficult to decide upon, and either might almost be taken as correct; but 1657 being about the time when many tokens were issued, and the era of some life and commercial progress in the town, may be accepted in future as the true date of George Martin's token. This was the Sovereign of 1649 of whose proceedings and the after-history of whose family so much is already known. There is a second token of George Martin identical with the preceding, except the date, which is 1666. It also is in the collection from which these descriptions are drawn, but, as it is not necessary to engrave more than one token of the same individual, is omitted. Both show the bell, but not the ship.

This is "Iosiah Martin—in Belfast 1657." He was either a brother or son of George Martin. It has also a bell, of most clumsy shape.

The next token is that of Michael Bigger, dated 1657. It is not in very perfect preservation, but sufficiently so to exhibit the date distinctly, and a bell with equal clearness. There are several tokens of the Biggers. In the eighteenth century they were, and had long been,



<sup>1</sup> *History of Belfast of 1823*, p. 81.

resident in High Street, and gave name to one of the numerous entries issuing from it.



This is "James Bigger, Marchat—in Belfast." It is a brass token, in good preservation, and dated 1666. Of the many persons who issued tokens

in the seventeenth century in Belfast, this one has in the town at this day the same surname of an individual occupying a prominent position commercially and otherwise.

The token of "Hvgh Eccles" is placed here, though without a date. As he was a merchant and shipowner in Belfast about



the year 1657, associated in the latter employment with known and important persons, there cannot be any error in assigning that date to his token. He

calls himself "Marchant," and spells the name of the town *Bellfast*, though the coin is without either of our noted emblems or any other peculiarity except a Coat of Arms.

The next is the token of William Smith, which is every way excellent, clear, and in good preservation. The date is 1657,



but there is no distinctive emblem whatever. William Smith was one of the most wealthy merchants in Belfast of his day. His will is dated in the

year 1684. He leaves in cash about £3600, an immense sum at the period. Even over and above this he also bequeaths debts, chattels, and other property to his family in Belfast, and a legacy to his sister in Glasgow. His eldest son was David Smith, or at any rate it may reasonably be so presumed, from being first named in the will. It may with equal probability be affirmed that this David was he who was afterwards the Sovereign of the town in 1699 and 1700, and the same who presented the beautiful little book, as already described, to the First Presbyterian Congregation. William Smith, with all his wealth, does not seem to have been so liberal as some others to the poor of Belfast. He leaves to the "pcor decayed Inhabitauntes

of the Burrough of Belfast Three Pounds Sterl. to be paid by my Executors, to be disposed of as the Sovereigne and Burgesses of ye<sup>sd</sup> Burrough for the time being or their successors, for the use of ye<sup>s</sup>d Poore."

"Alexander Sinklar—in Belfast." This token is undated, but Dr. Aquilla Smith of Dublin, the greatest authority on the subject of local tokens, makes out the date, from another specimen, as 1657, which may therefore be considered correct. The token is not in a good state, and has no distinctive marks except  $\frac{p}{1}$  for one penny, which is general on them all.



This token is of "William Thombe," on which the date is either illegible or altogether wanting. It may be taken as of the same time as the preceding, about 1657.

The appearance of the tokens of this era is not to be mistaken. There is a probable identity between the name on this one and another under a different orthography, well remembered by the old residents in the town. It might, perhaps, be farther conjectured that the William Thombe who issued this token was one of the few who paid the Subsidy Tax in Belfast in 1666.



"Robert Whitside—1667." This token of Whitside is in tolerably good preservation. The family is not now, at least under the same name, represented in the town. There is a will of John Whitside in the Record Office, dated 1676, which shows them to have been in a good position at that time.



"Hymphry Dobbin of—Belfast, Marcht." The date is 1670, and the token is in excellent preservation. The issuer was, without much doubt, one of the thirty-five new Burgesses chosen to govern the town by the advisers of King James the Second



when the original Charter was annulled. The name is of great antiquity in Carrickfergus and the County of Antrim. One of its present representatives, in searching into his family history, has discovered that Humphry Dobbin, who was a member of it, was but twenty years of age in 1670. The crest on the token is a dexter arm, the hand grasping a spear—the same as that used by some of the name at this day. There are families of respectability of this name in business in Belfast, but not probably connected with Humphry, the name being not an unusual one in the north of Ireland.

Token of "James Chalmers," and also of the year 1670.



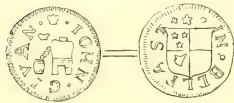
Chalmers was a member of a commercial family of some importance in Belfast in their time, but, like many others, are no longer known in the direct line. John Chalmers was Sovereign of Belfast in 1702. There is a Shield of Arms on this Token, as on several of the others.

This token of Belfast of the year 1671 is without a name.



It is in very good preservation, has a ship on the one side, and on the other extensive interlacing. The absence of a name is an unusual feature.

This is "John Givan—in Belfast," but undated. It is the only Belfast token which symbolises the employment of the issuer. The



object represented is a still, from which the inference may be drawn that John Givan was one of the distillers in the town in the seventeenth century.

"William Moore—in Belfast, Marchant." Undated, but probably of the same age with those



which have been last described. It is of brass, but figures the ship and bell, though as a whole it is not

in very good condition.



“Henry Smith in—Belfast, Merch<sup>t</sup>.” Undated, and a very thin and imperfect token. The issuer is not known. There were many persons of this name in the town in past times, but William Smith, already noticed, was the principal.



“John Corry of—Bellfast, Marchant.” This token is perforated in the centre, and is indistinct. The  $\frac{1}{2}$  for its circulating value is large and unmistakable. In Dr. Smith’s Catalogue, from a better specimen, the date is made 1656. If any date has ever been on this one, it is not now to be distinguished.



“Hvgh Speire, Merch<sup>t</sup>—in Belfast, His Penny.” There is no date on this token which can be read, and the object in the field on the obverse is too indistinct to hazard a conjecture as to its meaning. The coin is of brass, and is heavier than those generally of the seventeenth century, but there can be no mistake in placing it in that period. There is a duplicate of this token in the collection from which these coins are copied, also undated, but on which the name appears to be *Spaire*.



“John Kilpatrick — in Belfast, Marcht.” This is a brass token, but without any date. It is in good preservation, and has the ship and bell.



“John Bvsh, Bellfast— $\frac{1}{2}$ ” This is a very rude token, apparently struck on a French coin, a plan which had to be occasionally resorted to. It is destitute of date or symbol or any other notable characteristic, but it was also of the same period as the others hitherto described, John Bush having





attached his name as witness to a will of the seventeenth century. He appears in no other relation, and his name and history have alike passed away. He issued a duplicate of his penny, which differs from that here figured only in the spelling of the name of the town, which is in the modern way, *Belfast*.

This token indicates a union or partnership between Will. Lokart and Tho. Aitkin, merchants in Belfast—an unusual association, and an equally uncommon form. Lokart was George



Macartney's son-in-law, and both the individuals here mentioned were considerable merchants, but somewhat later than any of those previously described. This token

is of brass, and perfectly clear and distinct. It completes the series of the seventeenth century tokens of Belfast. There may be some others yet undiscovered, but it is not probable. At the same time, there were some merchants or dealers of the time who would appear not to have issued any, and to whom we would naturally look for such remembrances. The Warings, the Pottingers, Thomas Knox, and some others are unrepresented, for instance, in this interest. The inconvenience that all must have experienced from the want of small change can scarcely be conceived at the present day, and the persons who issued the tokens were in one important respect the most thoughtful and advanced in the community. Two tokens—one with the initials H.C., the other with W.R.—have been found in Belfast, and therefore most probably belong to it, the issuers being too modest to stamp their names in full, or else too well known to require to do so. They are in all respects plain and unornamented.

In the beginning of the eighteenth century another great issue of tokens took place, consequent, it is thought, on the failure of Wood's halfpence. A few of those of Belfast will here be represented as examples. As a coinage they were very considerable in number, and are quite easily known, even when undated, from those of the century before. The first to be noticed is the Belfast Ticket, which is *unique*, and of the most

interesting description. There is a full account of it by the author of this work in another place,<sup>1</sup> to which the reader is referred as more explicit than would be necessary here. The probable date of this token is 1735; and though so much larger and heavier than those of the preceding century, its value was only one halfpenny. It is a solid and substantial coin, and, by way of giving assurance to those who accepted it, the issuer has announced, with his name, on one side that the copper of which it is composed cost 1s. 2d. per lb. Here was value in metal, and its weight and convenience of handling must have made it a peculiar favourite with small dealers and their customers when even a halfpenny could not be lightly regarded. The most remarkable point, however, connected with this token is the representation on one of its sides of a part of High Street. There is an appearance like the crossing of the river by a bridge, and there can be little doubt that the building with the steeple is meant for the Market-house, once to be found at Corn Market. The one hundred and forty years which have run their course since Mr. Johnston looked upon his Belfast Ticket have blotted out from common memory all knowledge of his history and his doings in the town.



Contemporaneous with what may very justly be called the famous Belfast Ticket are two examples of other tokens of the eighteenth century. The age of the first is not conjectural, 1734 being plainly impressed upon it. William Ringland issued this token in Belfast, and though somewhat larger and heavier than that last described, its intrinsic value was comparatively much inferior, twopence, as will be seen, being its presumed purchasing power.



<sup>1</sup> *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. ii., p. 30.

The other is of "Hugh Magarragh, Belfast, 1736." Both these coins have much resemblance, and both have devices of a very



opposite nature—a dove and a lion—expressive possibly of the different dispositions of the issuers. Many of like character were issued about the same

time by other persons in Belfast, and in the towns and country places in the neighbourhood, and certainly not without reason, if we may take the following extract from the book which records the history of the building and early proceedings of the Third Presbyterian Congregation as a correct evidence of the condition of the circulating medium:—"1734, Dec. 4. To cash from Isaac Sime £8 8s. 8d. in w<sup>ch</sup> there is Twenty four shillings and nine pence in Raps." If charity did this, what could the public-houses expect? But perhaps it was unavoidable, the semblance of a coin in the famine for small change being thought sufficient. It therefore long continued necessary to make private money, and so lately as the year 1781 in this town the scarcity of copper change, or its debased character, was so sensibly felt that it was declared "Belfast was overrun with rap halfpence made at Birmingham and sold at three pence or four pence the shilling, and the same were now called down by the public Cryer by order of the Sovereign, and a general agreement made by the merchants and traders of the town not to receive them in change or payment." Even this authoritative pronouncement did not attain the desired object, as in the year 1790, in an elaborate article connected with the subject of an improvement of the mint, it was stated "that in every shilling's worth of halfpence circulated in the taverns and public houses in Belfast, there was not a chance of receiving four good ones."

The necessity of private coinage was thus on many occasions evident, and its advantages, there cannot be a question, duly appreciated. To our own times it has been in a manner continued, though more frequently, indeed, as an advertising medium

than for any other purpose. None of the tokens are of so much interest as those of the seventeenth century. They carry us back to a period so far beyond our own as to enter within the charmed circle of antiquarian speculation, or afford the gratification which attends some knowledge of the old townsmen of Belfast, of men whose ideas were of necessity circumscribed, and whose field of operation was but in a nutshell, compared with our own immeasurably more expanded and fruitful age in monetary and all other essential matters.<sup>1</sup>

#### EARLY BANKS IN BELFAST.

It cannot be discovered that any Bank was established in Belfast prior to the year 1752. In that year the earliest bank which is known was formed, the partners in which were Daniel Mussenden, James Adair, and Thomas Bateson, three of the principal merchants in the town. Of the first frequent notices appear in this work. Thomas Bateson was ancestor of the Baronets of Belvoir, near Belfast, of that name. There was much discussion as to the expediency of establishing a bank at all; and several pamphlets passed on the subject, now rare and difficult to discover. One of these was written by Abraham Protestmaker, but whether this remarkable name was fictitious or not is unexpressed. He represents himself as runner to a bank in Belfast, so that the establishment may have had an informal existence rather sooner than the year described, the pamphlet being dated 1751. The ideas about banking were rather crude, and the reasoning which Protestmaker had to combat was more odd than formidable. One of the sage pleas against beginning a bank in Belfast was that such an establishment would bring thieves and highwaymen into the country, even from so great a distance as Hounslow Heath, then a rather noted locality for characters of

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<sup>1</sup> All the tokens here engraved to illustrate this paper, and many more of other places, are in the collection of the late Edward Benn, Esq., of Glenravel, in the County of Antrim. Those of the early period form the most perfect collection of Belfast known, and, as mentioned in the text, are supposed to comprise a full series of all the tokens issued by the merchants and traders of this town in the seventeenth century.

that description.<sup>1</sup> The arguments of Protestmaker and others finally succeeded, and the bank was established.

Its objects and utility are explained by Mr. Mussenden and his partners in these words, which throw some light on the condition of the town and country at the period, more particularly their monetary affairs. The proprietors say that they have begun the bank—

“With the approbation and encouragement of the nobility and gentlemen of fortune in the north, and considering it an undertaking advantageous to the public; and as the usefulness of the Bank must principally depend on circulation of notes, and some people might scruple to receive them, the Landlords will take them for Rent. The notes therefore pass freely, and the Bank grants bills on Dublin for cash or notes without exchange. About 110 names of principal landholders and agents agree in the project. To accommodate dealers in linen cloth and yarn the Bank issues small notes,—Twenty Shillings in value,—and from time to time collect silver and half guineas so as to be able to give linen buyers £5 of specie in payment of every English bill of £100; so that they will have proper money to transact their business at markets without being compelled to give a premium for silver, a tax on linen buyers for many years. And as the people of the north are not used to a paper currency, they are informed that three fourths of the money current in the west of Scotland is in small notes, and it is well known how remarkably the trade and manufactures of that country have lately increased.”

There was at this time very little money in circulation; the lower classes, we may be certain, had not much beyond what was sufficient to meet their daily wants; the landlords had some, and were enabled to assist the linen-buyers and manufacturers; but the establishment of a private bank was a novelty, and should have been attended with the happiest results. From some cause, this, the first bank in Belfast, had but a short reign, as on the 23rd June, 1757, Mussenden, Adair, and Bateson dissolved

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<sup>1</sup> The full title of this pamphlet is, “A Letter from Abraham Protestmaker, runner to a Bank in Belfast, in Vindication of himself and the Bank, in answer to the Twelve Queries signed A.B. Lately Published against the said Bank. Printed for the Author, &c., 1751.”



partnership as bankers, but announce at the same time that they will take bills, "as their occasions may require, till the 1st of January following." There was therefore again no regular bank in the town, and it so continued for many years.

The illustration which the discussions regarding the origin of banking in the town cast upon other points is direct and curious. Thus, Protestmaker writes very distinctly of the Stone Bridge, and gives us to understand that opposite to it the bank of Mussenden & Co. was established; that the locality was the Exchange and general rendezvous of the merchants; and from the markets being all adjacent he calls it the Smithfield of the town.<sup>1</sup> The old Donegall Arms, as well as the Post-office, were also near at hand, so that satisfactory proof is thus given that this was the spot at which the great business of the town was then transacted. How Belfast managed to do without a bank can hardly now be imagined. Inconvenience must have been felt, but no movement was made, and in a work specially devoted to the subject of banking in Ireland<sup>2</sup> we have the following information respecting this town:—"In 1784 a Bank was established in Belfast. They had scarcely any circulation, as they paid in Gold. They gave up business in 1798 at the time of the Rebellion." No names are given in the publication from which this quotation is taken, nor any other authority for the statement. It is a very imperfect account indeed from a work professing to be on the particular subject of banking, and its accuracy is greatly to be doubted. From our home annals we derive fuller and better information.

The second Bank of Belfast was established in 1787. The partners were John Ewing, John Holmes, John Brown, and John Hamilton, the individuals whose names have descended nearly to the present day under the familiar appellation of "the four Johns." Their advertisement appears on the 8th of June, 1787,<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> These statements respecting some of the contents of Protestmaker's pamphlet are in a private letter addressed to the author by Mr. Pinkerton many years ago.

<sup>2</sup> Gilbert's *History of Banking in Ireland*.

<sup>3</sup> *Belfast News-Letter*, June, 1787.



and another of still greater length from the merchants and traders of Belfast, expressing confidence in the stability of this bank, and engaging to take the notes issued by it. Persons living have perhaps seen these notes, and the bank itself was a respectable establishment, but had, like the first one, but a brief career. Its location was at Cooney's Court in Ann Street. It is frequently alluded to in the newspaper of the day as the Bank in Ann Street.

In the same year, or perhaps in 1786, another bank was begun in Belfast by Waddell Cunningham, Charles Rankin, William Brown, and John Campbell. This is perhaps that which is alluded to by the author of the *History of Banking in Ireland*. It also, though it issued notes, was not of very long duration, and neither of them, or any other, was in existence in 1798.<sup>1</sup>

During the time of these banks there were discount offices. The first was established in 1785, expressly mentioning in its prospectus that it was begun for the accommodation of the buyers and sellers of white linen at the new Linen Hall then just opened. It consisted of nine members or co-partners.

The Belfast Discount Company was a greater establishment. It commenced 2nd March, 1793, announcing itself thus—

“We the Subscribers having associated for the sole purpose of Discounting Bills and Notes for the accommodation of the Public do hereby give notice that we will commence said Business at our Office in Rosemary Lane opposite the Old Sugar House on Monday the 25th inst. ; that our days for Discounting will be Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays only ; and that we are ready to receive Lodgements of Money in all sums not being less than £50 on terms advantageous and convenient to the Lenders, and for which the joint and several security of all the subscribers will be given.” The subscribers, and who might be esteemed a portion at least of the monied men of Belfast of their day, were—“Gilbert M'Ilveen, Harryville ; Robert Thomson, Jennymount ; Robert Stewart, Ballydrain ; John Brown, Peter's Hill ; Sam<sup>l</sup> Brown, Robert Bradshaw, Gilbert M'Ilveen jun<sup>r</sup>, Val. Jones jun<sup>r</sup>, David

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<sup>1</sup> The large buildings at the end of Castle Place, which within memory have gone through some changes, were erected by one of these companies. They were called the Bank Buildings, and still retain the name.

Tomb, George Joy, Rob<sup>t</sup> Holmes, Edw<sup>d</sup> M'Cormick, Jn<sup>o</sup> Robinson, all of Belfast; William Stewart, Wilmont; Francis Turnly, Newtonards."

There was a discount office some years after in Bridge Street, on the site of which the Commercial Buildings, or rather the shops in Bridge Street which form part of those buildings, now are, which possibly some very old inhabitants will still remember, and in which the presiding genius was one of the persons mentioned in the above list.

This state of banking has given place to establishments commensurate with modern requirements. There is nothing more indicative of the smallness of Belfast, even at the beginning of the present century, than to find that in 1804 it contained no bank whatever; and, though trespassing beyond prescribed limits, this sketch of the banks cannot be better concluded than by recording—what is familiar to many of the inhabitants—the time at which the three more recent banks commenced their business. The Belfast Bank was the oldest, having begun in a private house at the corner of Calendar Street, nearly opposite the Linen Hall, in 1808. The partners in it were David Gordon, Narcissus Batt, John Holmes Houston, and Hugh Crawford. The Commercial Bank was the next which was formed, namely, in 1809, at the foot of Donegall Street and corner of Waring Street, where is now a great grocery establishment of a size and grandeur to which banks in those times did not aspire. The original partners were William Tennent, Robert Callwell, Robert Bradshaw, John Cunningham, and John Thomson. The two banks just named amalgamated in 1827 into what is now the great Joint Stock Belfast Bank, on the site of the Old Exchange. The third bank also dates its existence from 1809, beginning in that year in a private house in Donegall Place, but forming itself in 1826 into the present Northern Banking Company. These and one other—the Ulster Bank—are all of Belfast origin, and are establishments on the greatness of which it would be unnecessary to dilate, even though the subject came within the sphere of our inquiries.

## THE OLD DOCKS OF BELFAST.

The original Creek or Dock of Belfast was the mouth of the little river which enters into the Lagan, or into the sea, at the bottom of High Street. The river so designated has been already several times referred to, and its course is more particularly described in the account of the Ancient Topography of the town. Its ending in High Street was the first dock or harbour of Belfast, cleaned and deepened, as circumstances required, to accommodate the boats or small vessels which frequented the place. The dock, if it could be so called, or creek, or quay-room proper, extended a considerable way up the river, but its fixed and best-known bounds reached from the sea to the present Skipper Street.<sup>1</sup> This small and most obscure port was the nucleus of the great docks and harbour of Belfast of modern days. By looking at the map of 1685 the original port is clearly depicted under the title of the River of Belfast. In it a few ships are lying, but a much greater number are outside, where already, as it is expressed, "improvement had been made out upon the strand," though as yet no convenient dock, no accommodation, no artificial landing-place existed, except on the stream within the town. This stream is all now arched over and hidden from the sight.

The poor little harbour thus described was, in accordance with the Charter of 1613, a free port, and vested in the Lord of the Castle, the Sovereign, and Burgesses. In spite of this title the

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<sup>1</sup> The early dock, or, as it was often and more properly called, "the Creek of the Borough of Belfast," has given occasion for many articles in newspapers descriptive of its first condition, and which generally accord with what is above written. A late article very truly and expressively says that "less than two centuries ago the harbour of this town was represented by the mouth of a small rivulet which ran from the direction of Church Lane through High Street into the Lagan," and proceeds to refer to the generally-known modern changes which took place from time to time till the harbour and docks reached their present greatness. Sometimes of old, in the enumeration of the ship accommodation in the north of Ireland, while mention is made of the "Custom House Kea" of Drogheda, the "Port" of Carlingford, the "Kea" of Carrickfergus, and the like, this almost unknown spot is only honoured by the title of the "Dock of Belfast," which was merely the termination of the High Street river, for an unmentioned distance up the street.

authorities contrived to exact, though not without some complaint, trifling sums from the owners or masters of the ships which traded to the port, chiefly for needful repairs, it is to be supposed, but part of which also sometimes went, as mentioned in the *Records*, to maintain the "hospitallitie" of the chief magistrate. The appearance of this original dock or stream in its unconfined state could not, without the map of 1685, be realised with any degree of satisfaction. The traveller, Molyneux, in 1708, rather commended it for the convenience which it afforded to the merchants to bring their goods into the town. But long before this era the accommodation in an increasing place was found yearly more and more inadequate. Symptoms of this are visible in the *Town Records*, and feeble efforts were made to keep up the necessary repairs. Thus, in 1670, four men were admitted to the freedom of the Corporation without the payment of the usual fees, on condition of working a certain number of days in providing stones for "the common Kee." Petty amendments of this kind marked a period without rigidly defined power on one side, or strict observance of bye-laws on the other, so far as dock privileges were concerned.

In 1675 a definite measure was taken for improvement, as, at a meeting of Assembly on the 20th of January in that year, it was reported that—

"Considering the great prejudice done the merchants in their trade and shipping for want of a good large Kea or wharf upon the river and dock of Belfast, they did present it as a thing most necessary for the good of trade and welfare of this Corporation that the old Kee or wharfe be enlarged, and built up upon the Strand on the south side of the river of the town next adjoining to the old Kee or new Stone House of George M'Cartney and Lewis Thompson; that supplication be made to the Right Hon. the Countess Dowager of Donegall and Lady Ann Chichester to give their consent and supply towards the building of the same—from the said Stone House to the Lagan River at low water, and the Sovereign to collect, and applot the inhabitants from time to time the sums required."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

This was merely a strengthening, or confining within limits, more of the town river towards the Lagan on the south side than had hitherto been done, and is the first modest notice which has been found in the *Corporate Records* of what would be designated in these days as a motion for "Dock Extension." The improvements previously had been on the small river strictly within the town, and this was to lengthen or add to it, and was therefore in one sense still inside the corporate limits. This early attempt at enlarged dock accommodation is shown to have been on the south side of the river, probably from about the church, or somewhat seaward of it, to the discharge in the Lagan, but the spot on which the Stone House of Mr. Macartney was is not farther explained, though the operations of the Macartney family in that direction are well known and defined.

These small improvements were thus on the High Street river, or merely consisted of marks to guide vessels in the difficult channel outside. This is illustrated by the extracts following<sup>1</sup> in proof of the state of the dock, and the regulations connected with it, as the entire stood in the year 1672:—

"By George M'Cartney Esq. Sovereigne of the Burrough of Belfast.

"By Virtue of Power given me from the Right Hon. the Earl of Donegall to execute the office of Water Bayliffe for y<sup>e</sup> Creeke or Harbour of the Borrough of Belfast and to receive all dues, dutyes, Customes, fees, and zquisitts (?perquisites) thereunto belonging and for y<sup>e</sup> more better keeping y<sup>e</sup> Channell of y<sup>e</sup> said harbour with markes or pearches to the Convenience of all shippes, barks, boats, gabbards, and lighters to transport themselves from y<sup>e</sup> Poole of Garmoyle to y<sup>e</sup> Towne of Belfast without danger of grounding upon the Banks of the said Channell—I doe hereby sett and to Farm Lett unto John Dean of Belfast mariner for one whole yeare commencing from 29th September the office of Water Bayliffe within the saide harbour, to execute all the things thereunto belonging especially in setting and keeping Pearches upon y<sup>e</sup> saide River in usuall Places thereof, and to receive for his services therein only the Fees of Anchorage accustomed due for the same: in Consideration whereof the said John Dean shall pay to me or my [                      ] the full sum

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*



of 40 shillings half yearly by equal proportions, and hereby requiring the saide John Dean from time to time and at all times to give me account of all misdemeanours, transactions, and [ ] that may happen in the said office of Water Bayliffe,—especially to give me a true account of all Vessells, Barks, and Boates running into the saide Harbour with Coles, Salt, Fish, Corne or other Victuals, or any other Lading out of which any custome doth or may arise to the s<sup>d</sup> office and to keep in good order at his own proper coste and charge all Barrols,  $\frac{1}{2}$  Barrols, or other measures belonging to the saide office for the common use thereof.

“9th October 1672.”<sup>1</sup>

This plain manifesto makes Mr. Macartney and John Dean supreme in dock affairs. They were the Harbour Commissioners of the day, deriving all their power and authority from the Lord of the Castle. Yet Michael Harrison was really the Water Bailiff, as two years after—that is, in 1674—Lord Donegall directs “that y<sup>e</sup> Sovereigne of the said Borrough for his better encouragement in the government of the said Towne, which generally consists of Marchant and Maryten (? maritime) affairs, have the office of Water Bailiffe, under a yearly acknowledgment rendered unto the said Michael Harrison.” Dean also was not forgotten; Lord Donegall expresses satisfaction with his discharge of duty, confirms him in his office, and he is instructed “to set Pearches on the River Laggan up to Strand Mills, as also upon the new dock or river up to the Sluices of Castle Wharf.” The acknowledgment of Macartney to Harrison, whether nominal or real, is nowhere stated.

The expression concerning the Castle Wharf may refer to the channel called on the map of 1685 the “New Cut.” It communicated with the Lagan, was adjacent to the Castle grounds, and a landing-place must have been upon it, probably for the pleasure or convenience only of the Chichester family. The dock guardians of the seventeenth century, who were, in fact, the Corporate body, attempted to do, it may be believed, what was in their power. Bye-laws were passed from time to time having relation to dock affairs, of which a few examples follow:—

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*



“22nd October 1696. For keeping clean the Dock, and for raising a Fund to make a Sluice for cleaning the same, it is enacted that all vessels, ships, or boats belonging to Foreigners that will have liberty to discharge at the Key of Belfast within the said Dock shall pay Twopence for every Ton that such vessel, ship, or bark shall be of burthen; and all such gabards, vessels, or lighters as belong to Freemen of the Borough which go to England, Scotland, or elsewhere, or along the Coast, shall pay one penny per Ton for their burthen at discharge, and the same rate on lading outward. And all such Gabards or lighters as only ply to Garmoyle and in the Lough shall pay 10 shillings per annum to be paid at 2s. 6d. quarterly. The said several sums to be received by such person as the Sovereign and Burgesses shall appoint, to be applied for making and preserving the said Dock, and the *superplus* to be preserved for erecting a Sluice in the River from Skipper Lane to Church Lane, which Sluice had been made and done before now, had it not been the interruption of civil affairs in the War.”

“At same time it was Ordered for preventing Damage to the New Bridge that hereafter no vessel lye at Anchor to the Southward of the Dock; and that such as are on the north side of the Dock be well moored on pain of Forty Shillings a Tide.”

“21st January 1697. Ordered that the River be cleared once every year to prevent overflowing, and every person bordering thereon from Mr. Chad’s Bridge to the Near Mill on both sides that do not every year clean the River before their Holdings between the beginning of May and Midsummer shall pay 5s. fine each year.”

How insignificant all this was!—little better than the occasional rules called forth from time to time at some small coast harbour. The Lord of the Castle, the Sovereign, and his Burgesses were rulers both on land and water. The expedients just detailed to meet the growing necessities were unavailing, and it began to be seen that larger powers were requisite. The rising trade of the town, and the loose and imperfect arrangements which prevailed, caused attempts to be made to place the dock on a more certain footing. This was soon after the Revolution, but changes could not be made in measures—which, it might certainly be thought, were equally valuable and important to all—without importing into the question some of that sectarian strife which then prevailed in the town, and which is given expression to in the following remarkable paper—

“The Corporation of Belfast hath power to make Bye Laws, and to punish Offenders by Fines, with the general Proviso that nothing shall impower them to act contrary to the laws of this kingdom. By colour of which within seven years past they have raised a yearly Ship-Money Tax by charging 2 pence per ton on all vessels that bring in, and Two pence per ton on all vessels that carry loading out of their dock notwithstanding the Dock of Belfast is a Free Landing Place by Act of Parliament. They have also raised several summs of money to oppose the Established Minister in the Prosecution of his just right, and compelled his Parishioners to bear large Proportions by Distraining and Selling the Goods of those that refuse to join in so unlawful an Undertaking. Their Presentments are generally made by persons that have little or no Estate or Free Rents, and who are Dissenters from the Church of England; their Applotters are seldom, if ever, sworn equally to assess the money, great part of which they charge on the free rents of those that have interest in Belfast and liberty thereof; even gentlemen that are neither freemen nor trade with them, and who are not concerned in their Corporation, whether they dwell in the City of Dublin or elsewhere. They refuse coppies of their presentments and disburstments to such as are willing to pay any Rate that can be demanded for the same and thereby prevent their making it publicly appear how unjust their levies are, and how oft they raise money for pretended works and necessities which are never employed to the same, and also how extravagantly they dispose of the said money. They have long prevented any Endeavours to Redress these Grievances by threatening to Humble all that oppose them.”<sup>1</sup>

Very grave accusations are here recited against the Corporation; the raising of money, not impartially, for dock extension, and its mal-appropriation, are strong complaints. Application

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<sup>1</sup> This was the time, it will be recollected, of the contest between the town and the Vicar on the subject of House-money. The allusion to that question is very distinct in the above, and the embittered feelings created extended possibly from the highest to the lowest in the town. The paper above quoted is not in the *Records*, but has been procured from the Rev. Dr. Reeves, with this reference—“A Printed Broadsheet bound up in a vol. of old papers in the Primate’s Records, and it is endorsed (in Bishop King’s handwriting) *Belfastes Case 1703.*” It may have been transmitted by the Vicar or other aggrieved churchman. Read in connection with the history of Mr. Echlin and the general disturbance reigning in the town in ecclesiastical affairs, as pictured by the Bishop of Derry in his letter to the Bishop of Down, it might form a suitable comment or addition to them.

to Parliament had been for some time contemplated, and accordingly in 1709 the heads of a Bill to remove the case of the dock above contention were submitted. The following abstract will explain what grounds existed for the foregoing charges, and with more certainty the critical, or, more properly speaking, the miserable, condition of the dock accommodation of the town:—

“Whereas the Port of Belfast in the Province of Ulster hath by long experience been found to be of great importance to her Majesty’s Revenue, trade in general, and to the benefit and advantage of all the country adjacent.

“And whereas the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commonalty of Belfast have for many years, at great expense, maintained and repaired the Key on both sides the River, and by continual cleaning and scouring the Dock and in keeping up perches on the side of the channel of the harbour there, have preserved a free and open passage for boats, gabbards, lighters, and other vessels to run up and discharge their lading at the said Key, which expenses they were enabled to defray by a certain tonnage which the merchants and traders there voluntarily consented and agreed to pay for that purpose.

“And whereas the said payment for want of the authority of Parliament has been of late discontinued, and the great unavoidable charge which is daily necessary for preserving the Port is become unsupportable by the Sovereign, Burgesses, and Commonalty who have not, nor ever had, any lands or revenue belonging to them, whereby the Key is become ruinous, and the Dock and channel choked up to such a degree that the Port and Harbour so beneficial must inevitably in a little time become filled to the detriment of her Majesty, the great prejudice of trade, and impoverishing of the whole inhabitants and adjacent country.”

To make their case still stronger, the public authorities join in the universal complaint by publishing the following memorial on the subject, which, if not strictly grammatical, has the merit of being brief, strong, and to the purpose:—

“We the Collector, Surveyor, and other officers of the Port of Belfast do certify that the Key and Dock of this Port is greatly out of Repair, and the Dock gorged with *Sluck* and dirt which obstructs vessels and lighters to get in and out of the same; and if some Fund

be not procured to repair and cleanse the same the dock will be choked up that vessels will not get in and out."

The evidence of mismanagement or incompetence somewhere, and entire want of funds, was irresistible. All were in accord as to the utterly broken-down and ineffective condition of the dock, and the urgent necessity of obtaining means for its renovation; but the estranged feelings generated among those interested prevented unanimous action. The Lord of the Castle claimed the appointment of Collector or chief official in the contemplated changes, much in the same manner as he exercised the privilege of choosing the Sovereign. The Corporation resisted this as contrary to usage, to the interest of the port and its good government, and their meetings, resolutions, and arguments are at great length in the *Records*. The appointment of Collector of the money and dues of the forthcoming dock, as by one party proposed, was affirmed to be unreasonable, and the long discussions close by this declaration from the Corporate body—

"There can be no parity of reason," they say, "because the Lord Donegall has a power by the Charter to name three to be Sovereigns that he should also have power to name three to be Collectors. The Sovereign is the principal person in the Corporation, and that was a trust reposed in him by the Crown when there were not above three or four houses in the Town,<sup>1</sup> and the Protestant interest was not well established to keep Corporations staunch in their allegiance and in the interest of England; but even the Crown did not think fit to grant any larger power for the election of the Burgesses, and the choosing of all the inferior officers and servants of the Corporation, such as this Collector must be, which was left entirely to the Corporation without the Castle, and therefore to grant him this power now would be giving him more than any of his predecessors, Lords of the Castle, ever claimed or had, and would be an innovation on the Corporation."

In pursuance of their view of the case, and in a most forcible remonstrance, reiterating the statement of the ruined condition of the dock, and the injury their own trade and the public

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<sup>1</sup> "Three or four houses." This was not to be understood as literal, though it shows a belief in the insignificance of the town when the Charter was granted in 1613.

revenue must sustain if a sufficient fund were not applied for its repair and maintenance, they request—

“Samuel Ogle, William Crawford, George M’Cartney, and Edward Brice to apply themselves to this present Parliament to obtain an Act to lay Two Pence per Ton on all goods exported or imported by free-men, and Three pence a ton on all goods exported or imported by Foreigners from off the said Key.”

This may appear rather uninviting matter for perusal, but when the present position of the docks and harbour of Belfast is considered, an account of the weak and early efforts of those interested in them in distant years must seem curious. The statements, from original sources, give a clear view of our Harbour Trust in 1709, or rather of our disputed and unsettled trust, if the word “trust” be at all applicable in the case. It was twenty years longer before a Bill founded on the arrangements as to dock payments and other provisions was obtained. Home dissensions continued, and even when the Bill was passed in 1729 it was soon found not to be effectual in improving the harbour or productive of the benefits expected from it. Differences continued for a farther lengthened period, which in 1740 produced an urgent appeal to the Government. The nature and causes of this application are explained in the annexed documents, which prove that there was really no fixed power in any official or supreme body in the town as yet to deal with the dock or maritime affairs of Belfast. The papers are long, but cannot well be abridged; perhaps it will not be thought necessary that they should be so, as they contain some interesting facts beyond the special subject of the evil condition of the dock.

“To the Right Honourable the Lords Justices & Privy Council of Ireland; The Humble Petition of the Principal Merchants & Trading Inhabitants of the Town of Belfast

“Most Humbly Sheweth,

“That in the reign of King James the first, Arthur Moyle then Lord Deputy of Ireland, obtained a charter to erect the Town of Belfast into a corporation, consisting of a Sovereign and twelve Burgesses and commonality, with power to build a Kay or Kays in some convenient part in the Port or creek of Belfast;



where all ships should have free liberty to load and unload their Wares and Merchandizes free of all manner of taxes whatsoever, paying his Majesties Dutys and that in the year 1662 the Dock of Belfast was by order of Councill made a landing place, and the Custom house being on the North side of the Dock, untill the year 1719 or 1720, Mr. Isaac Macartney inclosed a piece of the strand on the south side, which being more convenient for the Custom house, prevailed on the merchants to petition the Commissioners of his Majesties revenue, to build a new Custom house thereon, which being done, at great Expence, and Mr. Macartney having inclosed said strand, and built two Kays which were called the George & Hannover Kay and laid out the same into publick streets and built several Houses thereon, threw them open for the conveniency of the Custom house and the better to Encourage the setting of this ground which thereby became the seat of Trade, and which has always been paved at the publick Expence of the town, and afterwards finding he would be at some expence in keeping the Walls of the Kays in repair, got the Inhabitants of the town to apply to Parliament for a tax of three half pence p<sup>r</sup> Tunn on all goods loaded & unloaded at said Kays, to enable him to keep the Walls &c. thereof in repair, and three half pence  $\frac{3}{4}$  tunn more for other public uses, such as cleansing the Harbour, scouring the Dock &c. and after a Bill for the same had passed the House of Commons, The Right Honble The Earl of Barrymore Trustee to the Earl of Donegal procured it to be dropped in Councill as being a Discouragment to the Trade of the Town, and in the year 1727 Mr. Isaac Macartney came to an agreement with the principal Merchants to allow him two pence a tunn on all goods loaded and unloaded on said Kays, that sum being by antient custom paid by the merchants for cleansing the Dock, and carrying down the Kays on each side to the channell & the better to enable him to support the Walls and pay the Tear and wear thereof. A Lease of which toll or kayage Mr. Isaac Macartney granted to his son George, who sometime in the year 1738 sold the same to Messrs. Rainey Maxwell & William Macartney at the rate of ten years purchase, there being then more than Fifty years of the lease unexpired, the same two pence a tun being made the measure of their agreement, and the yearly income of it by computation at a medium of seven years last past amounted to about eighty pounds  $\frac{7}{10}$  annum the purchase whereof was about eight hundred pounds ster<sup>l</sup>, but the said Rainey Maxwell & Macartney not being content with their Bargain, tho' a very good one In a riotous and Illegal manner in August last attempted to raise the tax on all goods loaded and unloaded on said Kays to six pence a tunn



which the merchants not complying with as being prejudicial to trade, and an Illegal manner of Levying money off the subject, the said William Macartney made an affidavit before the late Lord Chancellor of Ireland to obtain an Injunction which being granted him, and on a full and open hearing of the cause after personal Interrogatories were exhibited & Witnesses examined on both sides, the present Lord Chancellor dissolved their Injunction and dismissed their bill with costs, to the great joy and satisfaction of the Trading part of the town and Gentlemen of Estates in the Neighbourhood whose Interest it is to preserve their Tennants from being taxed after an Illegal and arbitrary manner. Notwithstanding whereof the said Rainey Maxwell & Macartney have since published a printed advertisement demanding six pence a tunn upon all goods and four pence on coals, which is a great discouragement to trade and a lessning of his Majesties revenue in this port, and will not suffer ships to come to said Kays or any person to load or unload goods at this port, unless they comply with their demands. Therefore we humbly begg that your Honours will please to give orders to the Commissioners of the Revenue to order the Collector of this port to suffer all ships to load and unload at the Custom house Kay as usual paying his Majesties duties and said Gentlemen or their attorney the antient & customary kayage of two pence a tunn, untill they establish their right (if they have any) by the laws of the land or a verdict of their country and thereby prevent any farther Interruption to the trade of this place, the suit having been already very vexatious and expensive to the Merchants.

“And your Petitioners as in Duty bound shall ever pray.

“SAM <sup>L</sup> M‘TEAR	JAMES BLOW	MARGETSON SAUNDERS
SAM: HYDE	JOHN SHARP	HUGH PRINGLE
HUGH POTTYESON (?)	WILLIAM MURRAY	NATH: WILSON
PATRICK GETTY	JOHN BROWN	ALEX <sup>R</sup> YOUNG
EDW <sup>D</sup> MITCHELL	VAL. JONES	ABELL HADSKIS
JOHN HOLMES	JOHN GREG	ALEXANDER CHALMERS
JAM <sup>S</sup> BIGGER	HENRY KELSO	JN <sup>O</sup> POTTS
ISAAC READ	THOM <sup>S</sup> GREG	CHAR <sup>L</sup> WALSH
W <sup>M</sup> GREG	WILLIAM GREG	EDWARD HARIS
ALEX <sup>R</sup> M‘KELL	ROBERT CALLWELL	HUGH BOYD
WILLIAM WALLACE	JOHN CLARK	THO <sup>S</sup> HENDERSON
W <sup>M</sup> STAFFORD	HENRY AGNEW	JAMES BURGESS
JOHN ROSS	DAVID READ	WILL <sup>M</sup> SINKLAR.”
ROBERT ARMSTRONG	DANIEL MUSSENDEN	

This petition produces an order to the Commissioners of the Revenue to report upon it, which they do in the following terms:—

“ May it please your Excel<sup>cys</sup> & Lordships

“ In obedience to your Excel<sup>cys</sup> & Lordships Order of Reference to us of the Petition of the principal merchants & trading Inhabitants of Belfast, representing That when that Town was erected into a Corporation by charter, a Power was given to build Keys in some convenient Part, in that Port, where all ships were to load and unload their merchandize free of all manner of taxes whatsoever, paying his Majesty's Duties: And that in the year 1662, the Dock of Belfast was by order of Council, made a landing Place, and the Custom-House was on the North side of the Dock; And that, about the year 1716 Mr. Isaac Macartney inclosed a Piece of Ground on the South side of the said Dock, which being thought more convenient for a Custom-House, the then Com<sup>rs</sup> of his Majesty's Revenue, on application of the Merchants of the said Town of Belfast, caused a new Custom-House to be built thereon &c.

“ We beg Leave to acquaint your Excel<sup>cys</sup> & Lordships, that the charter for erecting Belfast into a Corporation, with a Power of building Keys, for the conveniency of loading and unloading ships, not having been ever seen by us, we can make no Report on that Part of the Petition which mentions the said charter, neither are we able to report anything in relation to the said order of Council, whereby the Dock of Belfast was made a landing Place &c. We can only take Leave to inform your Excel<sup>cys</sup> and Lordships, that, having inspected the Custom-House Books, we did find, That in the year 1718 the Merchants of Belfast presented a Petition to the then Com<sup>rs</sup> of his Majesty's Revenue, setting forth the Inconveniencies of the old Custom-House, and the necessity of a new one, which the Petitioners thought, could not any where in Belfast, be more conveniently placed, than on a Piece of Ground that Mr. Isaac Macartney had inclosed on the South side of the Dock. The Com<sup>rs</sup> having referred the said Petition to one of their General Surveyors, and to the Collector of Belfast, they reported the Allegations thereof to be true, and agreed in opinion with the Petitioners, as to the Place for a new Custom-House, which Petition and Report being laid before the Lords Com<sup>rs</sup> of his Majesty's Treasury, their Lordships were pleased to order a Custom-House to be built in the place aforesaid. And the said Isaac Macartney having made a Lease to the Crown of a Piece of Ground in the said Place

(adjoining to two Kays built by the said Macartney) a Custom House was accordingly erected thereon. And no keyage at all as we were informed, was paid till some years after the building of the said House; And when the said Mr. Macartney thought fit to make a Demand of keyage, he rated the same only at Two Pence a Tun, which the Merchants of Belfast paid him, & no more, as we are told, during his Life. But we hear that the now Proprietors of the said Keys insist on a much higher Rate for Keyage.

“ We farther beg Leave to observe to your Excel<sup>cs</sup> & Lordships, That the Proprietors of the said Keys, as well as the said merchants have often applyd to, & desired the Com<sup>rs</sup> of his Majestys Revenue to consider and adjust, the matter in dispute between them: The Com<sup>rs</sup> told them they were sorry for the occasion of their Application, and represented to them, that if this dispute of theirs should happen to continue for any time, they were afraid it would be attended with unhappy consequences to both viz. The Languishing of Trade, and the Fall of Rents; That they the said Com<sup>rs</sup> could do no more in the case, than recommend a friendly agreement to them which they did in the most kind and perswasive manner they could; but withal gave the Proprietors of the Keys to understand, they expected that the said Keys should be Kept free and open to the Trade as usual.

“ As Keyage is no duty, which the Com<sup>rs</sup> are empowerd, as they apprehend, to settle, and require the Payment of, they can only continue their good offices (if desired) to dispose the said Parties to an amicable Issue of this Affair.

“ All which is submitted to your Excel<sup>cs</sup> and Lordships Consideration by

“ Your Excel<sup>cs</sup> & Lordships most

“ Obedient humble Servants

“ EDW. RIGGS.

SAM<sup>L</sup> GREY.

BESSBOROUGH.

“ *July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1740.*”<sup>1</sup>

The twopence per ton by this document would appear to have been founded on usage, and an increase for providing two new quays was but reasonable and to be expected, though the claim may have been too large. Hanover Quay was very well known. It reached from the end of the Long Bridge

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<sup>1</sup> These two interesting documents have been given by J. P. Prendergast, Esq.

in Ann Street to the discharge into the Lagan of the High Street river, and is so marked in the map of 1791. It is now unknown under its old title. These papers disclose in a manner the whole history of our docks and harbour, and the topics of dispute and subjects of conversation between the merchants and shipowners of 1740—whose names are here given—against the exactions of Macartney and Maxwell. They also give the origin of the old Custom House of Belfast, in use for that purpose till within a few years past, and still standing; make certain the fact that the first Custom House was on the north side of the little creek, and so far confirm the statement in the article on the Early Trade of the town that the small store there described was its original site, when the dock was as insignificant as itself. The influence and operations of the Macartney family in reclaiming strand and constructing some of our first more respectable docks are also confirmed in official form by the papers. The chief error up to this period consisted in not having for the management of the shipping and dock interest a body separate from the old Corporation, now rather ineffective and quite unfit to cope with the importance of Belfast; and forty-five years more of inconvenience and contention passed before it became too apparent to be longer withstood. Accordingly, in 1785, Mr. Hewit, one of the members for the town, presented a petition from Belfast to the House of Commons, praying aid to make a channel in a straight line from the quay to the Pool of Garmoyle. He remarked, at the same time, that this was the first application ever made from Belfast for Parliamentary assistance. The petition stated that the situation of the harbour was such as to require the most strenuous exertions for its improvement, and rather than that farther time should be lost the petitioners would be satisfied to have an additional tax laid on the shipping, provided that the revenue so raised should be entirely expended within the harbour, and the conduct of it entrusted to persons interested in the trade and shipping of Belfast. This resulted in the establishment of the Ballast Board, a Corporation in itself, and entirely distinct from the municipal body of the town, and

it was only from the institution of this Board that real harbour improvements commenced. The annexed map shows the state of the port and harbour in 1785. It is a copy of that submitted to the House of Commons by the petitioners, and displayed to the members by Mr. Hewit in proof of our crippled condition at that not very distant time, and it represents the channel to Garmoyle even as it was in the present century. From the formation of the Ballast Board improvements at once commenced, but it was not till a far later day, and under another rule—almost, it may be said, during this generation—that the sweeping and effectual changes took place which are yearly continuing, and which are rapidly rendering the harbour and docks of Belfast among the most distinguished in the empire.

To follow the history of the docks farther would not be in accordance with the general object or the title of this work. The most of what has been written on the subject here will be quite new to inquirers. The full history of the Port of Belfast has been already treated in its modern relations by several well-qualified persons, but more particularly by one who, from his official connection with the Harbour Board and his special aptitude for the undertaking, has related its history up to 1850 in the most exhaustive manner.<sup>1</sup> The entire details of the trade and revenue of the town in recent days, the progressive modern changes in the docks, and in truth everything which can be desired to the time it was compiled, are entered on with a fulness of narration which leaves nothing to be desired. The inquiries in the present work reach to more distant times, and this early dock history cannot more appropriately end than with the following quotation, which brings the century to a close:—

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<sup>1</sup> The work so described is "A History of the Harbours of the United Kingdom—Belfast, 1852." The Government, as it has been stated, intended to obtain and publish a history of all the important harbours in the United Kingdom, but when a few were written they relinquished their design of completing the entire. Of the few Belfast was one, of which the late Mr. Edmund Getty, the Secretary to the Harbour Commissioners, was the compiler, and the reader is referred to it for most ample details. Mr. Getty was unable to go into the very early history of the Creek or Dock of Belfast, not having the old *Town Records*, and several other documents here first published.

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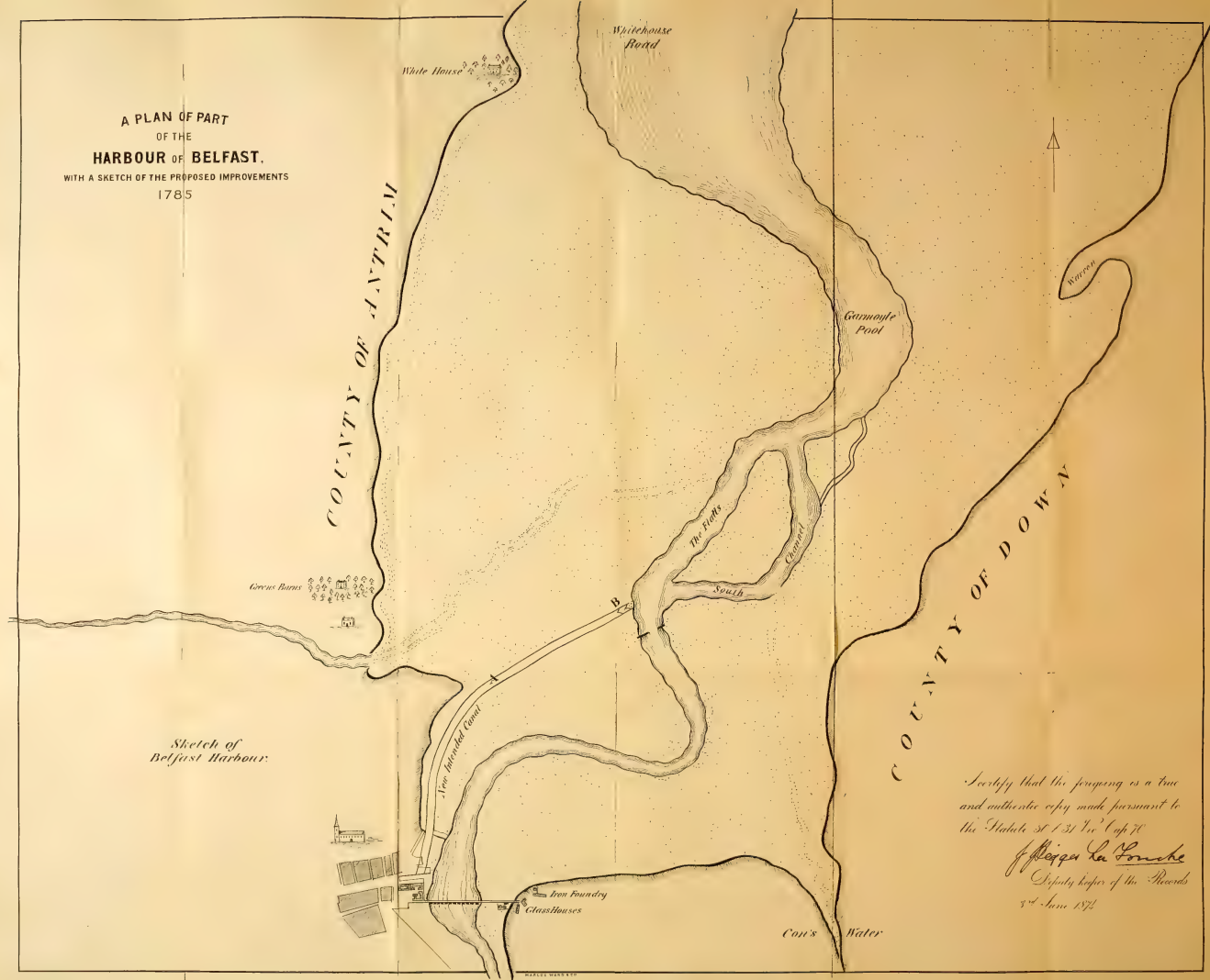
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A PLAN OF PART  
OF THE  
**HARBOUR OF BELFAST.**  
WITH A SKETCH OF THE PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS  
1785



I certify that the foregoing is a true  
and authentic copy made pursuant to  
the Statute of 13th Geo. 3rd Cap. 74

*J. H. La Touche*  
Deputy Surveyor of the Harbours  
8th June 1785

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“November, 1800. On Tuesday last the New Graving Dock at this Port was opened for the reception of vessels. It is capable of containing three vessels of 200 Tons Burthen each, and in ordinary spring tides there will be 9 feet water at the Dock Gates. This valuable accommodation to the trade of Belfast has been constructed by the Ballast Corporation, and has cost £6000.”

Small, indeed, as compared with the expenditure, accommodation, and requirements of the year 1876.

#### THE EARLY WATER-SUPPLY OF BELFAST.

The inhabitants of Belfast had first to rely on the water of the Town River, which has come under notice in so many different parts of this work, and of course also on that of the springs which are more distant from “the body of the town,” in which this stream ran. As the population increased, a purer and more convenient supply became necessary; and, so far back as the year 1678, George Macartney, ever alive to the public wants, engaged in this laudable object. The documents which follow will explain the extent of his interference, the condition of the town in the article of water, which has so agitated the community in recent years, and some details of a general nature connected with the subject.

“By GEORGE M‘CARTNEY Sovereign.

*“29th July—1678.*

“Whereas many complaints from time to time have been made of the great want of good and wholesome water to supply the daily occasions of the inhabitants,—for the River which runneth through the Town is very much defiled and abused by all manner of Sinks falling into it, and other nuisances corrupting the same, whereby the water is made altogether unfit for the use of man in meat and drink. And whereas for the better supply of the inhabitants with good and wholesome water the springs near the town have been viewed and estimated by George M‘Cartney burgess, and Captain Robert Leathes, which will cost near Two Hundred and Fifty Pounds sterling to bring the water in pumps or wooden pipes from the Upper or Tuck Mill Dam to the Great Bridge of the Town—about Two Hundred Perches in length—a place most convenient to supply the whole Town with water

by a common Conduit. Therefore I do here recommend the said work so well designed and feasible to be done to all the inhabitants—to give their free will offerings to defray the said Charge, as verily believing every person that has a regard for his own health will be most ready and willing to further said work, notwithstanding it may be carried on by the legislative powers of the Corporation.”

In accordance with the preceding notice, ten inhabitants were appointed to solicit subscriptions for providing Belfast with a full supply of water. How far they succeeded may be collected from the following entry four years later—namely, on the 11th May, 1682:—

“Francis Thetford Sovereign. Ordered; that whereas George M‘Cartney merchant, agreed with workmen, and brought clean *holsome* water in wooden pipes underground 200 perches into Belfast running at Three several standings in the Street for the supply and general good of the inhabitants, partakers of the comfort of the same, and the cost to him being £175 the Right Hon. Letitia Countess Dowager of Donegall, to encourage so good a work, promises to pay £40, but the remaining £135 could not be raised by subscription, so that three several Grand Juries of the Corporation presented that Mr. M‘Cartney be reimbursed by assessment, according to the several estates and abilities of the Inhabitants.” In July, 1682, this matter was brought for the time to a conclusion, as on that occasion “assessors were appointed to meet together in some convenient place, and before departure to plot and assess on the inhabitants for the amount, allowance to be made to those who had already given free will offerings, and to pay the same over to Mr. M‘Cartney with thanks.”<sup>1</sup>

This was the first water-supply of Belfast by artificial means, and when the enormous interests and expenditure for the same purpose now are looked at it cannot but be considered a remarkable narrative. George Macartney was chiefly instrumental in constructing what is called in the *Records* a “Water House,” necessary conduits, and wooden pipes. Petty as are the items, and small as was the expenditure at the beginning, it is probable there are few towns in the United Kingdom—even those of

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

much greater size than Belfast then was—to which water was brought by a similar method at so early a period.

The Great Bridge, which is mentioned in the documents as the spot near to which the water was brought, and where the general conduit stood, was the embankment which crossed the Blackstaff not far from the Castle; at least no other place is known to which such language is applicable. The distance from the Upper Tuck Mill Dam, so far as its situation can be discovered, to this bridge was more than 200 perches. The Town Clerk or transcriber in the Record Book was probably not very particular as to precise distances, and the description of a direction from one known place to another was deemed sufficient. In corroboration, however, of the general course which the water ran, as well as its source, there is a provision in a lease granted in 1702 by the Donegall family to Richard Hodgkinson of part of Lettice Hill, binding him “to keep safe and preserve during the said Lease so many of the Pipes conveying water to his Lordship’s Castle of Belfast as are placed in the said Premises.” This is in the line from the presumed site of the Upper or Tuck Mill Dam to the town.

The water-supply of Belfast, so early formed, continued to serve some of the inhabitants for a lengthened period; wooden pipes were known to many even in the present century. But as the town increased the quantity of water from this source was found more and more inadequate, and therefore in 1733 a lease was granted by the Earl of Barrymore, as trustee for Lord Donegall, to William Johnston of Newforge, near Belfast, for forty-one years, at the nominal rent of twenty shillings a-year, of “all waters, rivers, brooks, wells, and water streams adjacent and contiguous to the Town of Belfast, except such water courses and mill dams as are granted with the Mills of Belfast to George Macartney.” This water undertaker was also bound to supply the castle or house of Lord Donegall with water free of expense. The lease is a very long document, and the nominal rent at which all the water round the town, with the exception named, was granted, showed a wish on the side of Lord Donegall’s trustees



to encourage the needful enterprise. The sources from which this water was to be obtained are unexpressed in the lease, but probably much of it was derived from the Malone and Cromack districts. Mr. Johnston's name was still remembered in Malone almost within memory under the title of "Pipe-water Johnston."

This second water-supply of Belfast continued to be the property of the original promoter for many years. His lease did not expire till the year 1774. In 1753 it is advertised that "the Water Works which supply the town of Belfast, the property of William Johnston, Collector of Coleraine, will be set for seven, fourteen, or twenty one years." It would appear not to have been a very advantageous speculation for him, as in 1755 his son received gratuitously some valuable consideration in a lease of lands in Old Forge, in consequence, as it is expressed, "of the loss sustained by laying new water to Belfast." The original lease of the waters in 1733 refers to considerable works already constructed or in progress, mentioning pipes and pumps then in use, and others to be made with branches therefrom to be laid into the houses of the inhabitants. It evidently involved more important operations than those of George Macartney. Mr. Johnston's water privilege was advertised to be let at different times, as he would appear to have left the town. This was finally effected, as in November, 1762, James Hall is the lessee, and his declaration at that time is, that for the last half-year the entire sum received for the water has not been sufficient to pay the chief rent and the cost of keeping the works in repair, and that he must in consequence increase the charge, particularly "to the Brew Houses, Sugar Houses, distilleries and public houses;" and he hopes that none of these consumers, nor any gentleman or merchant in the town, will rob him of his property, but enter into an agreement at once for an advanced payment.

The supply of water to the town continued in a very unsatisfactory state during the remainder of the century, though two means of obtaining it had been formed. The complaints on the subject both by strangers and inhabitants were quite as great as in late times. In September, 1790, it was declared,

“that there are few even of the most insignificant villages so ill supplied with water as Belfast, a town where this great necessary of life is equally scarce and bad, its conveyance through the different streets imperfect, and the pipes in general decayed and rotten.” This is continued at some length in the same strain. Then in December, 1791, a more deplorable account is given of the town water, when it is said that “for Three days past, in consequence of the Frost and the rottenness of the Pipes which no longer serve their purpose, the poor have been obliged in crowds to desert their miserable dwellings in search of water in different parts of the neighbourhood. . . . Many of the rich also were in a similar plight, all drawing water from the country into the town.” In the same year, water obtained from outside springs was drawn through the town and supplied to the inhabitants at eight gallons for a penny. All kinds of devices and suggestions are mentioned as being resorted to for procuring water in the latter years of the last century. A newspaper correspondent writes, “that there are three excellent springs totally unappropriated situate in the Plains, and known by the name of Williamson’s Springs. Their produce is so considerable as to amount to one third of the whole of the water under Lease to the Town. They *emit*,” he says, “21,600 Gallons in 24 hours,” and he ends his long communication with this specimen of town gossip—“Were the inhabitants ever to increase so greatly as to require a supply for more than 25,000 persons, the number which it has been calculated the springs under actual Lease are fully equal to, the addition of the water now mentioned would amply accommodate 13,000 inhabitants above the present number. The population at this day is alleged to be from 19,000 to 20,000.”

In 1795 it was perhaps expected all this confusion and defectiveness would be done away with by leasing the water of the town to the Charitable Society, thus effecting two objects—a better system of management, and a timely addition to the funds of the Poorhouse. This was done by the Donegall family, into whose possession the springs seem to have again fallen by the termination, we may suppose, of the leases by which they were

held. A new power, however, and one apparently not altogether calculated for the purpose, was now in possession. The Charitable Society found the old wooden pipes in very bad condition; new ones, they promised, would be procured without delay; in pursuance of which engagement they advertise immediately after for "30 dozen of iron hoops nine inches in diameter, and 30 dozen more eight inches in diameter, to bind the wooden pipes which were to supply the town with water." They farther advertise for proposals for raising 720 yards of an embankment ten feet high round the intended reservoir at the old Mall, and digging 1726 yards of an excavation therefrom to the springs at Fountainville. All these works so taxed the resources of the "*Managers of the Poor House*," as they style themselves, that immediately after they express deep regret that they were never before in such want of money, "arising from the bad payments of the water subscriptions by the town, but more on account of the total sinking of their capital in the works now going on for supplying Belfast with water."

The Charitable Society had thus become the water purveyors of Belfast in 1795. They relinquished their rights therein in 1840, as will appear subsequently in the article which will treat of the early history of the Poorhouse itself.

There are several of the old springs near the town, or rather which were once near the town, but are now far within its bounds, which long possessed notoriety for the purity and abundance of the water which gushed from them. The best known, after the famous Cromack water, was Mundy's Well in Sandy Row, from which the water was conveyed in wooden pipes and supplied the well-frequented fountains in Fountain Street.<sup>1</sup> They are represented on the large map of 1790; and old inhabitants will remember them beset by crowds of itinerant carriers and persons from all the neighbouring streets. The carriers had horse and donkey carts conveying the water in large puncheons for sale, two small vessels hanging on the vehicle to measure off

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<sup>1</sup> From the information of Thomas Gaffikin, Esq.

the pennyworth, and little bells tinkling their welcome transit through distant streets. Pure water carried about thus for sale was long from necessity a custom in Belfast, and is even yet so from the Cromack springs.

“The old circular Bason at Bankmore from which water was supplied by pipes into many houses was itself filled by an open artificial course from Leister’s and Strandmillis Springs in Malone. The new supply, as the town extended, came from the north side, first from Solitude and Kerr’s Glen, and latterly from the Woodburn at Carrickfergus.”<sup>1</sup>

The present water-supply of Belfast is of the most imposing character. It is brought from a distance of many miles, has involved and yearly involves great expenditure, and is truly a contrast to the time in the seventeenth century when the whole town could not, or would not, raise by voluntary subscription £135 to reimburse Mr. Macartney for providing them with this real necessity of life.

#### EARLY POST OFFICE IN BELFAST.

The Post Office, as now understood, is comparatively a modern institution, and, till of late years, not deemed one that was very productive. The entire nett Irish revenue derived from this department so lately as 1785, and several subsequent years, did not amount annually to £14,000,<sup>2</sup> and the proportion of this sum contributed by Belfast must have been extremely limited. At the commencement of the eighteenth century there seems to have been no Post Office at all, in the present meaning of the term, established in this town. The correspondence which follows will illustrate this point, as well as the nature of our early postal arrangements for communication with the metropolis, then the great quarter for trading intercourse, and the means provided to supply the commercial and general public with the latest intelligence. The documents exhibit a very primitive

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Gaffikin’s MS.

<sup>2</sup> Clarendon’s *Revenue and Finances of Ireland*, p. 5, Appendix.

system indeed in comparison with our present great and well-ordered Post Office.

“To their Ex<sup>cys</sup> the Lords Justices Generall and Generall Governours of Ireland.

“The humble Peticon of the Sovereign Burgesses and Comonality of the Burrough of Belfast

“Sheweth,

“That of late the practice in managing the Stages of the Post on the road from Dublin to this Town hath been altered or otherwise neglected to the great prejudice of yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> for that the Post which usuly came in at seven eight or at furthest at 9 o'clock in y<sup>e</sup> morning doth not come in now till 11, 12 & sometimes till one in the afternoon, by means whereof (beside other inconveniencies) yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> who have forreign fr̃es (?) to negotiat lose the benefit of answering their correspond<sup>ts</sup> by the same Post on Mundayes and Saturdayes. That yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> have by letter apply'd themselvs to the Post Master General for redrese but without successe.

“May it please yo<sup>r</sup> Excys to make such order as you think fitt for removing the said comon grievance yo<sup>r</sup> Excys will please to consider that this place doth contribute to that Branch of the Revenue more perhaps than all the other stages together on this road from Dublin, & therefore hope due encouragement, w<sup>ch</sup> yo<sup>r</sup> Pet<sup>rs</sup> humbly conceive will be most effectually done by establishing a stage here all w<sup>ch</sup> is submitted to yo<sup>r</sup> Excys & the Pet<sup>rs</sup>

“Pray &c.

“JN<sup>o</sup> CHALLMERS  
“Sovereign.

“*Sept. 28th, 1702.*

“J <sup>s</sup> TAYLOR	SAM: SMITH	JOHN ECCLES
JO. CRAFFORD.	DAVID SMITH	NICS: THELFURD
JAMES ANDERSON	ROB <sup>t</sup> CLUGSTON	DAVID BUTLE <sup>R</sup>
ROB. LEATHES	EDW <sup>d</sup> BRICE	W <sup>m</sup> CRAFFORD
JA <sup>s</sup> SCHAW	ROB <sup>t</sup> LENNOX	PA: DUFFY
DAVID SMITH	JOHN BLACK	ARTHUR MACARTNEY
LEWIS THOMSON	NEILE M'NEILE	ISAAC M <sup>cc</sup> CARTNEY
HENRY CHADS	AND <sup>R</sup> MACEWELL	“WILL. SHAW.”

"DUBLIN CASTLE, 5th Oct. 1702.

"We Referr this Pet<sup>n</sup> to George Warburton Esq. Postmaster Gen<sup>l</sup> of Ireland to consider thereof & Report his opinion what is fit to be done therein.

"MOUNT ALEXANDER  
THO. ERLE."

"According to your Excellencies order of Reference I do hereby acknowledge that both before and since the Revolution I have severall times been applyed to for the more expeditious rydeing the stages which leade to Belfast both by the late Earle of Longford and that Corporation, especially those Postes that goe hence on Thursdays and Saturdays to which I have given answer as I now doe. That according to the regularity of our Postes That which goes to Carrickfergus by way of Belfast settts out from hence on Tuesday, the retorne thereof comeing in on Monday. The second settts out on Thursday and returnes on Wednesday. The third settts out on Saturday and returnes on Friday by which due course the Town of Belfast have about forty eight hours for answering the letters on each Post which I conceive to be very sufficient But what the said Towne expect is That our Postes which goe hence on Thursdays should be so early there on Saturday that they may have time to return answer to those Letters on Monday and those which goe hence on Saturdays to be there so early on Monday that their answers may return hither on Wednesday which is contrary to the regularity of this Office and detrimentall to the Revenue thereof because should their desire be granted they would have constant opportunity to answer both our Tuesdays and Thursdays Letters by the same Post that returnes hither on Mondays.

"That however prejudiciall to the office yet generally I doe beleive in sumer and other good weather the Petitioners have their Letters in the time they desire but in the winter bad weather and long dark Nights it cannot be done without Augmentation of sallaries for greater expedition which I conceive her Matie ought not to be att the same tending wholly to the Losse of the office and in nowise to its advantage.

"I doe finde that the Petitioners are mistaken in their supposition that the stage of Belfast is more considerable then all the other stages from Dublin to that Towne for that the other stages together amount yearly to a far greater sune then that of Belfast.

"That I conceive there is no cause for establishing any other stage there then is at present, Mr. Elsmere Collector to the Commissioners of the Revenue haveing the charge of that Post bagg and who I believe



discharges that Trust with all Justice to the Corporation and all other the Inhabitants.

“All which is humbly submitted to your Excellencies  
by your most obedient Servant,

“GEO. WARBURTON.

“LETTER OFFICE DUBLIN

“October 1702.”<sup>1</sup>

The Collector of Belfast thus performed the extra duty of Postmaster for the town. According to the foregoing answer to the memorial, he received the post-bag from the travelling postman, and distributed the letters when those for whom they were intended called to ask for them. Mr. Warburton's answer really gives a very clear exposition of the working of the northern post to this town from Dublin in 1702. The post-messengers travelled on horseback, there not being roads for wheeled carriages, at least for anything like the whole distance. The limit of the journey was Carrickfergus in this direction, Belfast being taken on the way.<sup>2</sup> The riding-post—as the functionary who carried the bags was, even very far on in the last century, called—sometimes lost the mails, and a day or two would elapse before they were recovered, and occasionally he was robbed of them. These difficulties, and the increasing necessity for regular postal service, caused incessant orders or laws to be made directed to that object. In Ireland at the time, and prior to the introduction of mail coaches, the mails were conveyed by the postmasters, to whom special allowances were made for each particular service. There were no fixed rules as to time, three and a-half miles per hour being the regular pace, which was perhaps accomplished in good weather, and when no mishap occurred. Our private or home Post Office arrangements advanced with commendable quickness, and are more interesting.<sup>3</sup> In 1739 there was a Post

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<sup>1</sup> For these most interesting papers the author is indebted to the kindness of John P. Prendergast, Esq.

<sup>2</sup> An assertion has been made that Lisburn was the General Post Office at the time on account of the linen manufacture established in it. Mr. Warburton does not state so, but appears to make Carrickfergus occupy that position.

<sup>3</sup> *News-Letter*, 1749.

Office independently of the Collector of the Customs. In that year a shopkeeper advertises his establishment as opposite the Stone Bridge and next door to the Post Office. Ten years after another important step was gained, the uncalled-for letters being carried about for distribution, though under very inefficient circumstances, the Postmaster in 1749 announcing that "the inhabitants of Belfast who expect Letters at the Post office are desired either to call or send for them, as the *Person* formerly employed to go about with them is now incapable by the Infirmities of Age."<sup>1</sup> This was, there is not much doubt, the first Post Office of the town. The Postmaster at the end of his advertisement expresses a desire to employ another man to succeed him who had been forced to retire from active service, but "he must be well recommended for honesty." In 1755 Post Office Entry is mentioned, which was one of the favourite places of resort near the Bridge. The Post Office adjoined this central spot, and it probably remained there for a very long period, references being frequent to its existence in that locality. In 1757 the transmission of letters to Dublin was provided for only as yet by a tri-weekly post or messenger. "The Post for the future leaves for Dublin at 9 o'clock at night on Mondays and Saturdays, and on Wednesdays at 7 o'clock as usual." Yet this was more frequent than postal communication with Scotland, which was but twice weekly, and that—at least at the commencement of the century—by an open boat, from Donaghadee.

Improvements must still have been going on. In 1795 there is an advertisement that the "Post Office will be removed to Donegall Street on Wednesday next precisely at 12 o'clock," most probably the second place in the town in which it was fixed. With equal probability may it be said that the first Postmaster was Robert Wills, whose death "as Postmaster of the town" is mentioned in 1758. The Post Office of 1795 was at the foot of Donegall Street, near the Belfast Bank. A card was issued from it in 1795 to the following purport, which shows the imperfect manner in which business was conducted:—

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<sup>1</sup> *News-Letter*, 1749.

“The Post Master requests that the Merchants who are in the habit of sending little boys for their letters in the evening will be pleased in future to send more proper persons, as the confusion occasioned by the very improper conduct of those boys causes mistakes to be committed, very prejudicial to the interests of the merchants, for which the Post Master, as things are at present conducted, cannot hold himself accountable.”

After a few years more the office was removed to Church Street, and during this century was in two other unsuitable places before it settled down in its present location in the Custom House.

Old people will recollect some peculiar features of Post Office practice in the early part of this century. They may remember how the clerk at the wicket was besieged by a shouting crowd; extensive merchants, for a yearly consideration, had an inquiry place for themselves, and perhaps still have, but the common delivery window was the scene of much disorder and delay. The attendant in the inside had often a lighted candle at hand, by placing which behind a letter he endeavoured to ascertain whether any enclosure was contained therein, in which case the charge was doubled, or by some rule greatly increased. Then at another time an old man in spectacles might have been observed wandering through the streets with a large bundle of letters, being those which were not called for, delivering each at its destination—if he could find it—at the charge of one penny for his trouble, in addition to the serious Post Office payment. Those who have seen these things, or who only now hear of them, and who know at the same time something of present universal postal speed, the frequency of letter deliveries, their convenience, punctuality, and faithfulness, and the necessity for all these, may truly say that in none of its features has the country changed in a manner more marked and beneficial than in the great department of the Post Office.

## EARLY TRAVELLING OF BELFAST.

The accommodations and convenience of carriage for passengers and goods in early times are somewhat kindred to the Post Office, and not less remarkable in their wonderful development from a rude and imperfect to a highly advanced condition. Easy intercourse with Dublin and with the small towns in their own neighbourhood were naturally much desired by the inhabitants of Belfast in the last century, but these objects were only to be attained by a long probation. The beginning of such efforts took place with the capital in 1752, when the first stage-coach to Belfast was established, and the speed and general history of the conveyance are thus related :—

“On the 13th of August 1752 the Belfast Stage Coach with six horses, considerably larger and more commodious than any other in Ireland, will set out from Mrs. Dunn’s in Bolton Street, Dublin, at 8 o’clock in the morning, and stop the first night at Mr. Moffit’s, the White Hart in Drogheda ; the second night at Newry ; and the third will arrive at the New Inn at Belfast. It starts from Belfast on the following Monday at 5 in the morning ; and performs the Journey in three days as before. . . . A Book will be kept for taking Seats, and receiving of Trunks or Parcels, in Dublin at Mrs. Dunn’s, and in Belfast at the New Inn or at Mr. Samuel Stewart’s in North Street.”

Such were the public means of conveyance between Belfast and Dublin in 1752—a journey of three days—quite sufficient to deter any one from travelling unless on affairs of the most urgent character. At the present time it is quite practicable—and is probably sometimes done—to travel from Belfast to Dublin in the morning, transact several hours’ business in the city, and return to this town in the evening. Yet the moderate rate of speed of 1752 could not even be maintained, as in October, 1754, it was announced by public advertisement that “the Proprietors of the Belfast Stage on account of the badness of Roads between Belfast and Newry can only run from Dublin to Newry during the winter season.” The inhabitants of Belfast were thus deprived of public communication with Dublin during

the winter in the middle of the last century. Nor does it appear that this condition of matters was remedied for very many years. So long after as 1787 this town petitioned the Government to establish a mail coach to Dublin, but the application was unsuccessful, the answer being that the state of 'the roads rendered such a project impracticable. The next year, however (1788), it was announced that "a coach was established to run from Belfast to Newry, where it arrives in time to deliver its passengers to the evening coach for Dublin, which place they reach next morning. By this conveyance people can go from Belfast to the capital in about 26 hours." This was an advance from thirty years before, and one of the coaches which ran with a speed so marvellous to the people of the time was called, in proof of their admiration, the "Newry Flying Coach." The day mail from Belfast to Dublin was soon after established, and exclamations of wonder were many a time heard, a considerable way on in this century, from persons when seeing this coach on the Malone Road (the present Lisburn Road not being then made), at the thought that it should have traversed such an immeasurable distance as from Dublin to Belfast in one day.

When no public conveyances existed, travellers were compelled to hire private vehicles. In March, 1785, a person from England attending the Linen Market in Belfast was disappointed to find no coach here by which he could reach Dublin. He wrote a long letter, in consequence, to one of the newspapers then in the town,<sup>1</sup> urging the establishment of such to the enterprising inhabitants of Belfast. He farther complains that from the want of a stage-coach he had to hire a chaise, which, as he could find no partner, cost 1s. 3d. per mile and upwards—a very serious expense, he says, for himself individually. This was a common mode of travelling in 1785, and long afterwards. Two or three persons would unite to hire a chaise for a journey, by which the cost was lightened to each, the charge being generally about twentypence per mile. To the towns at some distance from Belfast

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<sup>1</sup> *Belfast Mercury, or Freeman's Chronicle*, March, 1785.



a journey on horseback to transact business was a still more usual practice, and altogether the difficulty and expense of travelling in the old times are nearly inconceivable to the more favoured people of this day. The pillion is now extinct; but it is related that in the last century female shopkeepers in Belfast went to Dublin by this mode of conveyance to purchase goods. Belfast was not behind the rest of the world in its efforts to serve the public, and so early as 1753 "a new Hackney Coach," as it was called, was established to carry passengers short distances, the farthest being Carrickfergus, the nearest the Phoenix. Ten places are named near the town to which this, the first hackney coach, or local travelling conveyance of Belfast, would carry passengers. The prices are mentioned, as agreed on "by the advice and approbation of the gentlemen of Belfast;" but for other places, not named, thirteenpence per mile, with some incidental charges, were required.

The carriage of goods to Dublin was performed by vehicles clumsy in form and slow of motion. Even so lately as 1795 a waggon was put on this road to travel once every week between Belfast and Dublin.<sup>1</sup> This department of travelling, or rather conveying, could be pursued at great length. In the streets of Belfast, wheel cars, even in High Street, were the common vehicles for the carriage of goods.<sup>2</sup> But why refer to those primitive conveyances? An intelligent, trustworthy inhabitant of Belfast, who died at an advanced age some years ago, was accustomed to relate that he had seen in his own day both turf and hay drawn into the town on slide cars, which are vehicles without any wheels at all. Surely the country is going apace when an advance from a burthen which was little more than a back-load to the great railways now surrounding the town on every side, has taken place during little more, perhaps, than eighty years.

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<sup>1</sup> *News-Letter*, July, 1795.

<sup>2</sup> "March, 1788. A young child was struck with such violence by the gudgeon of a loaded car in High Street that it is not expected to survive. The car under the care of a little girl."



Transport by sea in the last century was attended with delays and obstructions quite as great as land travelling, and which the present generation of merchants would find totally unendurable. When one looks at the ready, daily, quick intercourse now between Belfast and Scotland, this advertisement in 1773 is a sort of a curiosity—"The Peggy, a stout new vessel, fitted up as a packet to sail between Belfast and Greenock or Portpatrick, has nine convenient beds; is stationed in the river; and ready to sail at any moment's required warning." The last clause is but advertisement colouring. The Peggy could not sail at any warning if the winds forbade. So true is this that the writer, a year or two before steamboats commenced their regular passages from our quays, knew a person who was three weeks on the water, or driven into and detained in some port by adverse winds, before he could make good his passage from Belfast to Liverpool.

#### EARLY LIGHTING AND WATCHING IN BELFAST.

The change that has been brought about in the lighting of the town from the days reported in the *Corporate Records*, when the inhabitants were required at certain seasons of the year, or, as it is sometimes expressed, "except in moonshine," to place in their windows a twinkling candle to enlighten the gloom, up to the present great gas establishment, is a stride not less wonderful than any which has yet been adverted to as one of the beacons marking the course of Belfast in its onward progress. In early times, and at a comparatively recent period as well, there was nothing definite or on a legal foundation in the proceedings connected with this subject. It was not till 1761 that the Sovereign, James Hamilton, called together the inhabitants occupying houses of the yearly value of £5 or upwards—in consequence of an Act recently passed, compelling cities and corporate towns "to be enlightened"—that they might consider and carry into effect "a measure to light the town in obedience to the law." There could have been no great progress made in this measure at the beginning, the repeated notices, advertisements, and complaints

of inefficiency for many years after proving the fact. The necessity of lamps, at least on the river in the town, is urged, and the customary taunting expostulations are made by amateur improvers, that when six or seven gentlemen or merchants fall into it, that then there may be a hope of having the town "enlightened."

A movement was made, however, in every respect in a small way, in October, 1761, when a lamplighter is advertised for. The important functionary may have been obtained, though his duties could not have been very heavy, as in September, 1762, the situation of the town with regard to public lights is related in these words—

"Though the Legislature have enacted a law for lighting the market towns in Ireland, the circumstances of Belfast are such that the magistrates find difficulties in carrying the law into effect, so it is feared the inhabitants must live in darkness, unless a sum can be raised by voluntary subscription. If such method should be proposed, it is but reasonable to hope that the contribution will be general, and sufficient to answer a purpose so agreeable and beneficial."

In pursuance of this notice the inhabitants assembled at the Market House to consider of a method of raising sufficient money to light the town with lamps during the ensuing winter. The voluntary subscriptions, it is to be feared, were not very lavish—possibly not forthcoming at all—as in September, 1765, a shop having been broken into and robbed in the night, the reflection given expression to on the occasion was that the robbery could not have been committed had there been lamps lighted or a night-watch in the town, both of which are soon to be established. They were, therefore, up till 1765, yet unaccomplished.

For another year no effectual steps were taken to light the town, as in September, 1766, it was reported that a vestry was held in the church "to deliberate upon and determine the proper manner of lighting the town the following winter," and a presentment was made for 130 lamps for that purpose. No particulars remain of the debate on the occasion, the amount of subscriptions,

or the general arrangements, but this was the first systematic introduction of town lamps. The number was considerable for 1766, and, under arrangements adopted then and subsequently in the present century, a method of lighting the town was perfected and continued till the introduction of gas, now nearly sixty years ago. Many inhabitants will still recollect the old oil lamps—how feeble were their rays, how often and how easily extinguished—and know what frequent endeavours were made at and before their time to amend the government of the town in the acquirement of a strong and constant light through its streets. The lights must have been bad in 1785, as in that year an order was issued directing the inhabitants, when an alarm of fire was raised, to place candles in their windows to guide the steps of those who were running to extinguish the flames.

The first special order which has been found connected with the Watching of the town dates so far back as 1694, and is as follows :—

“Pursuant to an Order of Court upon presentment of the Grand Jury for regulating the abuses in keeping Watch in this Borough you are required duly to summons by turns the persons whose names are hereunto annexed to serve as Captains of the Watch, with the number of Twelve substantial men every night ; and such Captains you are to summon to be with me every night before setting the watch to receive the word and orders, and let them know they are to continue from nine o'clock at night to six in the morning, and to go the grand round at twelve o'clock at night, and that you yourself see due care taken that the 'Top Tee and Trevally' be beaten every morning and evening. Whereof fail not at your peril and this is your warrant. Given under my hand and seal,

“EDWARD HARRISON,  
“Sovereign.

“October 20th, 1694.”<sup>1</sup>

There is a military element in this order, as if the echoes of Schomberg's drums yet resounded over the land. Neither at the period specified in it, nor for long after, was there a night-watch constituted under regular form and always at command. The

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

watch was created for the occasion, when any rumour or reality of invasion or disturbance or internal disquietude troubled the peace of the town. It was always voluntary and gratuitous, at least on the part of wealthy inhabitants, and was compulsory only when some great occasion arose. There were always the town sergeants, as they are frequently called, and also constables, but these were to execute the decrees of the Sovereign's Court, and perform the other duties naturally arising among a busy, if not a very large community. But there was really no regularly-paid and formally-appointed night-watch to guard the town during the silent hours of darkness at all times and under all circumstances. The nature and constitution of the watch in the last century will be best explained by the following order:—

“The keeping of a sufficient Night Watch in the Town for securing the lives and properties of the inhabitants having been greatly neglected and the large number of French prisoners rendering a watch still more necessary than ever, the Sovereign orders several Constables to be active and diligent in the discharge of their duty with respect to the watch, and every night to have at least Twelve able men besides a Captain to keep watch from 10 o'clock at night till sun-rising in the morning. And in case any of the inhabitants shall refuse and neglect to keep watch in their turn either by themselves, or some other sufficient persons for them, when duly summoned, the said constables are to give immediate information to me thereof as they shall answer the contrary at their peril, that the legal fines may be levied for such refusal or neglect, as I am determined to put the law in this behalf strictly in force. But it being the interest as well as the duty of every individual at this time to be active and hearty in the matter, I am in hopes they will readily and willingly do what is incumbent on them, so that I shall not be under the disagreeable necessity of granting warrants to levy the fines and forfeitures for any neglect, pursuant to the Statute in that case made and provided.

“STEPHEN HAVEN, SOV<sup>n</sup>, *3rd December, 1759.*”

This irregular kind of night-watch, though from the language of the Sovereign under statute law in 1759, continued, with occasional modifications, into the present century. So lately as 1812 there was a system somewhat similar, and the book

containing the record of a voluntary night-watch at that time is still carefully preserved by the owner and considered a curiosity, inasmuch as it forms a true history of the period on the subject to which it relates. Any notice of this book is rather crossing the line which divides past history from present days, but though so recent, it seems in some of its features so like returning almost to the seventeenth century that a slight attention to it may be permitted. The respectable inhabitants formed themselves into a watch, with the sanction and approbation of the Sovereign and the one or two magistrates who then sufficed for the town. Four of their number met at night at the old Exchange with a sergeant, two corporals, and twelve privates of the militia regiment then lying in the town. Two or more of the voluntary gentlemen constables went out in different directions, attended by some of the military, and after patrolling certain streets for a fixed time, returned and entered in the book what they had seen, heard, and done during their time of active duty. The handwriting of many inhabitants still well remembered is to be found here, though it is probable not one of the number is now living. The entries are not in general quaint or peculiar; mention is often made of extinguished lamps, of people returning late from the theatre or a masonic lodge, of some fighting in the streets, of intoxicated individuals being taken up and brought to headquarters, whence they were dismissed without rebuke or punishment when sober, and of meeting "moonlight flittings," as they are called. Such entries as these form the mass of the reports. But a hundred times more worthy of notice than any in the book is that which, on the 27th of October, 1812, records that James Sheridan Knowles, the eminent dramatic writer, was one of the constables of the night, associated with Charles Thomson, William Lawson, Patrick Boyle, a sergeant, a corporal, and some privates of the Dumfries Militia. He patrolled, on the night of that day, with his attendant guard, North Street, and all the pleasant lanes to the west of it.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mr. Knowles lived at this time with his family, and also kept his school, in Crown Entry, the first door to the right on passing into the entry from High Street.



This form of voluntary night-watch was resumed again in 1816, called forth on both occasions by disorders and disturbances. In 1816 the lighting was in a most ineffective state, when on the 19th of February it is reported by the patrol that at half-past three in the morning "no lamps were burning in Rosemary Street, only one in Bridge Street, five in Waring Street, and a great many more extinguished in different parts of the town." Another night the patrol reports that "all the lamps in Mustard Street, Union Street, and Little Donegall Street were out." But a more eventful notice occurs on the 27th of February, 1816, in these words—

"Prior to the fourth patrol going out (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 3 o'clock) several shots were heard apparently from North Street, and immediately on the Patrol getting to the top of North Street they found the front of Mr. Johnston's house a good deal destroyed by an explosion of gunpowder or some other combustibles, and although every search was made from that till six o'clock no suspicious person was found in the street, and the Guard was then discharged."<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes petty or ludicrous matters engaged the attention of grave and intelligent men. In March, 1816, it is written in the book—"We would recommend that in future two Penny Baps should be provided for each man as the Sergeant finds it

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Before this the school had been in a house which stood where the Commercial Buildings now are, and which, so far as can be learned, was the first place in which Mr. Knowles established his school in this town when he abandoned the theatrical profession. It has been said sometimes that the school was in the old discount office in Bridge Street, on the site of which the Commercial Buildings also are; but among the row of old houses opposite the Exchange, and in that one of the number which had a high-pointed gable fronting the street, it has been told to the writer that James Sheridan Knowles had his first school, whether correctly or not he cannot tell.

<sup>1</sup> This event caused great excitement, and, though it occurred sixty years ago, is still frequently referred to, as, in its results, one of the most disastrous that has occurred in the town in modern days. Two men who were convicted of the crime—which arose from trade or wages disputes, Mr. Johnston having been a cotton manufacturer—were executed; and to make their sentence and punishment more memorable, Castle Place, in the very centre of the town, now so brilliant with animation, and because it was central, spacious, and convenient for great groups of spectators, was chosen as the spot for the last dread finishing of the law, and there they were accordingly hanged in September of the same year. The crime is first noted in the above simple words of the Town Guard.



difficult to divide the present allowance which is Twenty one Baps to thirteen men." The Town Watch had their perils in those days, as in attempting to arrest Hugh Kelly in Forest Lane for disorderly conduct he is reported to have "hunted a Bull-Dog at them." On 21st April "the second Patrole went out at Twelve o'clock, and returned at one o'clock with a person named Finlay Downey who was arrested by Mr. Knowles, having given evasive answers, and been seen lurking about Skipper Street during the night." The author of "Virginus" appears to have had a taste for the watch; perhaps even from the night-brawlers of Belfast some dramatic sparks might have flashed.

"On the 19th May No. 1 Patrole report that they found Jas. Storey, formerly a Bookseller in Belfast, and a man who reported himself to be a Chaplain of the American Navy, lying drunk in Rosemary Street, and after interrogating both they denied to be subject to English Law and swore vengeance against any man who would oppose them."<sup>1</sup>

The constable who remained at the Exchange reports that "Mr. Quinn of High Street came to the Guard Room to request assistance to force two Chairmen to carry a Mr. White who had been wounded by a person named Gardner to a Surgeon. I despatched the Surgeon and two men with Mr. Quinn."

Notices of the preceding kind are numerous in this book,<sup>2</sup> and it must seem remarkable that in the memory of persons still living a system so inoperative should have been the rule in this now great community. It was soon after discontinued, and many inhabitants will yet recollect the venerable band who were appointed, or may have heard the cry of the old watchmen sixty

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<sup>1</sup> This entry is signed "James M'Henry, Surgeon, Special." This "special" was well known in Belfast in 1816 by his literary labours and general talent. He afterwards went to America. The list of Dr. M'Henry's works will be found in *Notes and Queries*, 5th S., July 31, 1875, p. 94. James Storey, supposed to be the same who is above noted, was a bookseller at the foot of North Street in the early part of this century; but why he allowed himself to be overcome in Rosemary Street with the American chaplain is rather inexplicable.

<sup>2</sup> The book from which the few preceding notes are drawn is in possession of W. H. Malcolm, Esq., Belfast. It is of considerable size. The year 1812 is complete, but 1816 is unfinished.

years ago shouting out at night the hour and the state of the weather, and the rattles which announced their presence, or proclaimed danger in prospect. These were under the control of subordinate boards; they have long since passed away, and the special subject to which this miscellaneous paper refers is now, under rules and Acts of Parliament, sustained by sums of money, supported day and night by a little regiment of police to protect the persons and property of the inhabitants, which would have appeared wonderful to the worthy men who voluntarily patrolled our streets in the year 1812—much more to the twelve halberdiers who, little more than a century earlier, and that but occasionally, were a sufficient guard for all the town.

#### THE EARLY THEATRES OF BELFAST.

“In 1736 the Smock Alley Company, under the management of Lewis Duval, at the close of the Dublin season visited Belfast. They opened on the 16th of July with the Comedy of the Stratagem, at which the Earl of Antrim, Lord Hillsborough, Clotworthy Skeffington, Esq., and many others of the nobility and gentry were present. As the company opened again in Smock Alley in the following October, their stay in the North had been short. They seem to have visited Belfast for several years, as I find at the close of the Dublin season in 1741 Mr. Duval went as usual to Belfast and Newry. The place in which the performances took place at these times is not certainly known, but it may be supposed to have been in the Market House.”<sup>1</sup>

It may be questioned whether the play here mentioned was the first theatrical performance in Belfast, as in the *Funeral Register*, already sometimes noticed, and hereafter to be analysed, there is, under the year 1731, this reference—“June 18th. To the ffunerall of Mrs. Johnes, Playhouse”—the last word indicating the locality from which the funeral issued, or in which the deceased resided. It may not have been a theatre or playhouse in the proper application of the term, but some temporary structure for the purpose. The term “Playhouse,” however, would apparently describe a place where plays were acted in the

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<sup>1</sup> From the *Pinkerton MSS.*

year 1731, with the form and ceremony befitting such representations.

As the century advanced there were two theatres in the town—one called “The Vaults” in Ann Street, and the other at the Mill Gate in Mill Street. The former was the principal, though the name conflicts with the airy and joyous spectacles which form so much the staple of the theatrical world. Its situation has not been exactly ascertained; but it may be concluded that this theatre was somewhere in Ann Street, or very near it, and that in the same direction the playhouse has found an abiding place for much more than a century. Mention is made of the Vaults in 1758, and abbreviated specimens of theatrical advertisements are inserted in proof of the curious title—“At the Vaults the First Part of Henry the Fourth and the Lying Valet July 3rd 1761;” and in February 1766, “A New Ballad Farce never performed before in any place, called The Humours of Belfast, with an occasional Prologue written by a Gentleman of this place. At the Vaults.” Is this native production still in existence? Previously to the appropriation of the Vaults for theatrical purposes, and even after it, the Market House is frequently mentioned as the place of performance, and sometimes the theatre generally. It is not certain what place of right properly bore the latter name. “The Vaults” most probably did so, and notices occur of repairs and improvements being made on the place, as well as criticisms on the actors, and warm thanks from managers for the support which they had received during their stay in the town.

It was not sufficient, however, for the play-going population, for “on the 3rd of April 1770 Mr. Ryder’s New Theatre in Mill Gate opened with the Suspicious Husband, and the Mock Doctor.” It is not likely to have been a very imposing structure, though there is a notice accompanying the advertisement describing the propriety and decorum which the manager is resolved to observe, and the general regulations of the house; and that it could scarcely have been altogether a mean place is proved by many incidental observations which occur regarding it. O’Keefe acted

in the theatre in the Mill Gate, and doubtless many others not unknown to fame.

There was still a third theatre in the town in the last century, but it has not been ascertained when it was erected. It was in Rosemary Street, nearly opposite the First Presbyterian Meeting House. The proof of its existence is in this advertisement—"Nov., 1800. To be sold by Auction at the Market House on the 29th inst. that large and extensive Tenement in Rosemary Lane, *adjoining the Play House Gate.*"

The great theatre of the town in modern times was that in Arthur Street, which was built in 1792, and recently replaced by a still more stately structure on the same site.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The history of theatricals in Belfast is one replete with a value of its own. Many curious and striking particulars could be obtained of its career in this town. Theatrical histories, reminiscences, and biographies make frequent references to the old play-going days of the last century in Belfast. John Bernard was here for a considerable time in 1783, and has left two volumes of *Retrospections of the Stage*, in which there is much anecdotal matter of a professional kind. He calls Mr. Amyas Griffith the critical Sovereign of Belfast; mentions "that our season proved so successful that Mr. Atkins was induced to think of building a new theatre, the old one being small, infirm, and inconvenient." Whether this applies to the Vaults, to the theatre in Mill Street, to that in Rosemary Street, or a new one altogether, we are not informed. A statement has been made that there was a theatre once in North Street, but no documentary proof of such has been adduced. The three mentioned were undoubted. They were unpretentious structures, and it is quite possible that besides them occasional places may have been used for theatrical performances in North Street or elsewhere.

Belfast is a place to which great commendation has justly been given for its theatrical taste and discrimination. It was the scene of the early performances and triumphs of several persons who afterwards reached the highest eminence; but, as a curious theatrical statement, the writer has been recently informed that Miss Mellon, the actress, afterwards Duchess of St. Albans, first appeared on the Belfast stage; that she lodged in her early days in Cole's Alley, off Ann Street, or some equally obscure place; and that she was a native of the town of Antrim. These statements respecting the antecedents of the famous Duchess are not vouched for. They are from a very old and respected native of Belfast who was observant and note-taking all his life—the late Mr. Henry Greer. It may be mentioned, however, as a fact which is not now stated for the first time, that Master Betty, who attained such sudden and extraordinary popularity, and Miss O'Neill, afterwards Lady Beecher, every way so eminent, as well as Miss Mellon, gained their first laurels on the Belfast stage, and that the talent of all three was discerned at once by the play-going public of this town. The progress in this direction has not increased with the population and wealth of the town. The taste for the theatre was very great in the past, and it must have been exercised sometimes under difficulties, as in 1788 the prices were 5s. 5d. for the

## THE OLD POORHOUSE.

The Poorhouse or Charitable Society of Belfast merits, for many reasons, special commemoration. It is the oldest charitable institution in the town, being now in the second century of its existence. The first movement for the establishment of the house took place in 1752. The design was to combine with it the rebuilding of the church, the prospectus declaring that "the Church of Belfast is old and ruinous, and not large enough to accommodate the parishioners; and to rebuild and enlarge the same would be an expense grievous and unsupportable by the ordinary method of public cesses." A Poorhouse, as it was styled from the first, was not less indispensable "for the support of vast numbers of real objects of charity in this parish, for the employment of idle beggars who crowd to it from all parts of the north, and for the reception of infirm and diseased poor." The third object in view, therefore, as expressed in the last clause, was an Hospital, which was essential to complete the project. The rebuilding of the church was found unsuitable in connection with the undertaking, and more than twenty years later it was accomplished by different means. The whole combined plan was to be effected by the aid of a lottery,<sup>1</sup> the favourite monetary resource of the times, and this lottery having great expenditure to meet was on a scale of equivalent magnitude. The sum proposed to be raised by it was £50,000,

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boxes, 3s. 3d. for the pit, and 2s. 2d. for the gallery. Two theatrical advertisements of this year are here noted. One is that "the Theatre in Ann Street must be enlarged, and subscriptions are solicited for the purpose. It is proposed to make it ten feet wider and five feet higher." The projector adds, "The old House in Mill Street is a disgrace to the Town." The other advertisement says—"As some ladies who have a taste for dramatic performances were seen in the Gallery instead of the Pit or Boxes, it is respectfully noticed that such has a tendency to injure the Receipts of the House at a time when the Manager is at such extraordinary Expenses to bring actors of eminence to the Theatre."

<sup>1</sup> This is a copy of one of the original tickets for the great lottery in 1753—

"No. 05. M. 317. Belfast Anno. 1753. This Ticket will entitle the Bearer to half the sum, Irish currency, arising to the same Number, if drawn a Prize in the present Lottery in England; to be paid at the Bank in Belfast Fifty Days after the drawing of the said Lottery is finished; pursuant to the scheme published here for erecting a Poor House and Hospital, and for building a Church.

"EX. R. WILSON.

SAM<sup>L</sup> SMITH."



after the absorption from which of the prizes and expenses it was expected £6875 would remain for the objects specified. The first Bank of Belfast, then just established, undertook the financial part of the scheme, but the profit arising from it only reached £1736 2s. 4d. Great difficulties and some dissensions arose on the subject. Several years passed over without any action being taken in building, and in 1767 another lottery was projected, which, though much less ambitious in its pretensions than the former one, produced a gain of £1462 14s. 11d. In the following year the managers, from the profits of lotteries and other sources, found themselves in possession of no less a sum than £7592. Accordingly, in July, 1768,<sup>1</sup> the Poorhouse scheme offered a prospect at last of taking substantial form. It was announced that "Lord Donegall was pleased to perfect a grant in perpetuity of a convenient plot of ground in a healthy and beautiful situation opposite the head of Donegall Street to a number of gentlemen in trust for the purpose of building a Poor House and Infirmary." Yet so slow were building operations in those days that three years more elapsed before the structure was begun, as here related.

"On 1st August 1771, a large body of the principal inhabitants of the Town assembled at the Market House from whence they proceeded to the ground allotted for the Poor House and Infirmary; where Stewart Banks Esq. Sovereign of Belfast laid the first stone of that edifice on which is the following inscription :—

"This Foundation Stone of a  
Poor House and Infirmary  
for the  
Town and Parish of Belfast  
was laid  
On the First Day of August A.D. MDCCLXXI  
And in the XI. Year of the Reign of  
His Majesty George III.  
The Right Honourable Arthur Earl of Donegall  
and the  
Principal Inhabitants of Belfast  
Founded this Charity,  
And his Lordship Granted to it  
in Perpetuity  
Eight Acres of Land  
On part of which this Building is Erected."

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<sup>1</sup> *Belfast News-Letter*, 6th July, 1768.



Between the time the idea of the scheme was introduced and while the building was in progress the poor were not neglected, and balls, concerts, theatrical entertainments, and lotteries were often undertaken for their benefit. From the Poorhouse books much information is to be gained of the various plans submitted for the buildings, and the ordinary prices of materials in 1771. It appears that it formed no part of the original intention to admit children into the institution, a recommendation having been approved of that it should be made sufficient to accommodate only thirty-six persons in the Poorhouse side, and twenty-four in the Infirmary. The Bill of Incorporation, obtained in 1774, seems to have set aside this arrangement, poor children being recognised in it as one of the objects of the charity, and to which they were admitted to the number of twenty for the first time in 1776.

Some of the entries are curious. In 1771 the freehold estate of the Charitable Society produced £8 16s. 8d. a-year.<sup>1</sup> "In

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<sup>1</sup> For this statement, and for some of the other particulars here published, the writer is indebted to a sketch of the history of the institution drawn up by the late Reverend William Bruce of Belfast, who was for long years one of its most untiring and devoted supporters.

Dr. Charles Purdon has also taken great interest in the Poorhouse, and written several valuable papers concerning it. But indeed this interest has been general among the medical profession in Belfast from its commencement till the present time. The following are a few extracts from Dr. Purdon's papers:—

"1774, 17th September. Seven beds for the reception of the sick sufficient for the present."

"1775, March 20. 1s. 1d. to be paid to Dudley the Bang Beggar for bringing a Beggar to the House."

"1776. The number of out poor in Belfast at this time were from 130 to 160."

"1776. Mr. Bristow reports that several gentlemen and ladies have applied to have a Monthly Assembly in the House at 5s. 5d. per quarter, profits to go to the Charity. A Monthly Ball preferred."

"December 26. This Committee request Messrs. Campbell and Alexander to act as Gentlemen Ushers at the Monthly Balls in the House."

"1780. Resolved—that there be three Balls on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday next. Tickets 3s. 3d."

"1780. Volunteers exercised in the Grounds, but the mob having broken down the Hedges they were requested to discontinue."

"April 17, 1779. Messrs. Joy and M'Cabe laid before the Committee an intention they have of carrying on Cotton Manufacture to a considerable extent.

1775 the Produce of an Exhibition given by Mr. Stevens for the Benefit of the Charity amounted to £11 2s. 7½d." This was George Alexander Stevens, the clever dramatic and song writer, who wrote and delivered the "Lecture on Heads," which must have been attractive to the Belfast people of 1775. In the same list and year the subscriptions of the inhabitants are set down at £352 13s. 0½d.—a very liberal contribution. In 1777, after enumerating the number in the house, there is added—"Besides six little Cabins belonging to the Society given to six poor Families; £171 to poor Housekeepers from the produce of the Collection at the Church and the Three Meeting Houses and other casual aids; and the Profit of a Ball at the Poor House £5 13s. 1½d." In 1777 it is noted "that the rents of the tenements and land of the Society go towards paying the outstanding prizes in former Lotteries on which account there remains a considerable balance due." The rent, to be worth mentioning, must have already much exceeded that of 1771. In another year the following appear among a great number of other entries:—"Received at a Benefit Play £16 16s. 4d.; at a Charity Sermon £48 2s. 11½d; at Five Balls £38 5s. 4½d. The snuff and tobacco this year for the inmates amounted to £10 6s 11d." It is also

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They propose to employ the children in spinning, for which they will make an equitable allowance to the House. They likewise desire that they may be allowed to set up their machinery in the waste lower rooms." This request was complied with, but there is no record of its success or length of continuance. It is the first notice of the introduction of the spinning of cotton into the house; and it, as well as the following from the *News-Letter*, might very properly have formed a part of the history of the Early Cotton Manufacture in Belfast (*ante*, p. 349), but will not be out of place here.

"August, 1776. Nicholas Grimshaw from England intends to carry on the printing business in all its branches at Green Castle within 3 miles of Belfast. Handkerchiefs, garments, and furniture printed. He attends and exhibits patterns at Belfast every Friday, and on other days at Carrickfergus, Randalstown, Magherafelt, Ballymena, Banbridge, Hillsborough, Lisburn, Armagh, Rathfriland, Newry, and Lurgan." Linens as well as cottons are mentioned in the advertisement. Cotton was the principal fabric, it may be supposed, as about the same time Mr. Robert Joy applied to the Poorhouse for some yellow cotton to try an experiment with Mr. Grimshaw's carding machine.

perhaps not generally known that the committee had an eye to the water-supply of Belfast as a source of support almost from the time of the erection of the buildings. There is an entry dated 20th February, 1773, calling "a meeting of a General Board to consider about treating with Mr. Heyland for the lease of the Water Works." This was about the time of the expiration of Mr. Johnston's lease, which some other lessee had perhaps obtained. But the principal entries in the early time consisted of accounts of contracts and expenses for the buildings, among which the old steeple figures for an expenditure of £170 15s. 0d.

The house was first actually opened in December, 1774, and a few weeks after, the following advertisement was issued :—

"Belfast Poor House, February 15th, 1775. Provision being now made in this House for the greatest number of the Begging Poor, and new Badges provided for the Remainder with Licenses to beg for a limited Time, until the House be fully fitted up for their Reception, it is expected that the Inhabitants will direct their attention to those and discourage all public Beggars, who, they may be assured, are not entitled to their Charity. And whoever shall apprehend and bring to the Poor House any such strolling Beggars will be paid 5s. 5d. for each after next Saturday."

This was stretching Poorhouse authority very far. The badges here referred to are to be found yet occasionally among miscellaneous collections. They are made of pewter, are oval-shaped, and are impressed with numbers and the seal of the Incorporated Charitable Society.

The Poorhouse flourished, and obtained in a little time a stable footing. It was visited by eminent persons who passed through the town, the greatest of whom were probably Howard, the philanthropist, and John Wesley.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Wesley mentions in his Journal in June, 1778—"The Poor House stands on an eminence *fronting the main street*, and having a beautiful prospect on every side over the whole country. The old men, the old women, the male and female children are all employed according to their strength; and all their apartments are airy, sweet and clean, equal to any thing of the kind I have seen in England."

In *Howard's Life*, p. 326, his biographer says "he landed at Belfast on 13th July, 1779. He found the French prisoners very much neglected, many of them

It is but reasonable to assume that there is not an inhabitant of Belfast, however recent his connection with it, who is not acquainted with the Poorhouse. When built it was at a little distance from the town; now it is far within it, but it never faced, nor does it now face, the principal street, as John Wesley stated. The land belonging to it has become chiefly building ground, except that part within the railings on which the house stands, and the enclosure above it, which is the property of the Society, and called the New Burying Ground, a name which seems strange, and has awakened curiosity among those who only know Belfast in its present state. The explanation is, that what is now a crowded city of the dead was new in 1797, and has ever since retained its original title. This advertisement discloses the fact—"Poor House, March 1797. The Public are informed that the Burying Ground near the Poor House is now ready, and that Messrs. Robert Stevenson, William Clark, and John Caldwell are appointed to agree with such persons as wish to take Lots." A few years before 1797 the condition of the Poorhouse and its grounds is described and condemned by many persons. Among others there is a very long letter, so original and impressive in

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being sick, but not taken into hospital from the want both of room and accommodation."

Howard was here again in 1787, when his account of the Poorhouse is not very flattering. "At Belfast he inspected the Incorporated Poor House, many of whose lodging rooms were down ten steps, whilst the spacious hall and rooms adjoining seemed to be used but for the occasional diversion of young people of the town" (p. 529).

Persons of rank also visited the Poorhouse when there was little else worth visiting in the town. The Earl of Hardwick, Lord Lieutenant, did so in 1804, and the circumstance, and many other details of the establishment, historical and descriptive, are in a poem having for its sole theme the Belfast Poorhouse, written by David Boyd, and printed in 1806. The poem is a record of such small events as would seem naturally to arise in an institution devoted to noble objects; its early benefactors are alluded to, Mr. Robert Joy being specially named as the individual by whom

———"Cotton first to town was brought;  
Carding machines and spinning Jennies wrought,  
Long in the house not to augment his store;"

but all for the support and benefit of the indigent. The author was apparently an inmate of the house, or at least quite at home in it as a frequent visitor.

tone as fully to justify some quotations from it. The letter is addressed to the Managers of the Charitable Society, and begins with lamenting that a very necessary part of their work is still unfinished—viz., the enclosing and improving the adjoining grounds, now lying in a disgraceful condition.

“You have a Lease of the premises in perpetuity,” says the writer; “the scite of the whole is very beautiful, commanding the most enchanting prospect; and *nature seems to point it out as a place of pleasure and retreat to the citizens of Belfast.* . . . My most respectable fellow citizens, set about this useful undertaking by enclosing the whole of the ground with a very substantial ditch planted with suitable trees (Buttles Lane must be taken to the outside of the western boundary) and then lay out the whole with taste and propriety, including a Bowling Green, a piece of water, numerous and variegated walks judiciously planted and shaded. Thus from the appearance of *nakedness and distress which is the present prospect* it would assume that of beauty and elegance. *The inhabitants of Belfast would cheerfully pay 2 pence a piece for liberty to wander through and relax themselves from the toils of business in this delightful retreat.* . . . My worthy clergymen, take up this important work; benevolent ladies of Belfast, ever forward to promote those measures which must end in harmony, beauty, and mercy. . . . I implore you all not to lose a day; human life is short. . . . Look forward, my virtuous Townsmen, when populousness and opulence will go hand in hand, when Recreation will be panted after, and when these *New Gardens* or *Vauxhall* or what you may please to call them will be frequented to the great Emolument of your House of Industry . . . generations yet unborn will bless you, and you will thereby remove that disgrace which its present despicable appearance brings on the present race.

“GALEN.”<sup>1</sup>

Short-sighted Galen! You never conceived where Carlisle Circus was to be, or the splendid roads, or the magnificent buildings, or a great town nearly in itself, stretching towards the mountains miles away beyond the delightful walks and shady alleys where the tired citizens were expected to wander in seclusion, listening to the melodies of the choristers of the

<sup>1</sup> From the *Belfast Mercury, or Freeman's Chronicle*, 8th October, 1784.



grove, or participating in the other enjoyments of the Vauxhall of Belfast. Yet, though short-sighted in all this, the letter, from which only a few grains of wheat have been sifted, is a most original production, and in its entirety gives an excellent idea of what the top of Donegall Street was like in the year 1784.

It is to be doubted whether the pressing language of Galen produced much result, for in 1791 the Poorhouse was in pecuniary distress, and made this appeal to the town—

“No opportunity,” they say, “should be omitted of aiding the declining funds of the Poor House and Infirmary, though to our discredit so many are. The rage for theatrical amusements can never be better applied than in aiding the purposes of humanity. . . . It may be hoped the day is not distant when every species of public entertainment will be made to contribute to charitable institutions. Within these four years, by Volunteer balls, assemblies, and concerts, £250 per annum were received by the Poor House now totally lost to that institution.”

Complaints of want of funds in this strain are numerous ; but in 1791 and a few subsequent years political causes tended to reduce the receipts. The income of the Society from all sources is now about £2600 per annum, and, though liable to variation according to the voluntary yearly subscriptions, is certain to increase beyond the present large amount. Of this sum £800 a-year is received from the Water Commissioners for the relinquishment of the water, which was leased to the Society in 1795 with the view of forming a permanent income.<sup>1</sup> The eight acres given by the Earl of Donegall in 1768 have expanded now into about nineteen acres, including the graveyard and the lawn on which the institution is built. This increased ground adjoins the original grant. Much of it has been built on, and a large portion yet remains to be let for that purpose. Since the formation of

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<sup>1</sup> This sum of £800 a-year was first obtained by the Charitable Society in the year 1840, and all the water rights of the Society made over for it to the Water Commissioners of Belfast. The Society pays a nominal rent of about £12 a-year to Lord Donegall, by whose family grants have been made at different periods of portions of the ground since the original gift of the eight acres in 1768.



the Society there have been above 150 donations and more than 175 bequests, a few of which have reached £1000 each, but none higher, and the subscriptions from the inhabitants of the town generally amount to about £250 a-year. The only buildings which have been added by private individuals since the origin of the house have been erected recently by two generous and benevolent persons, one the north-west wing in 1866-67, at a cost of £2500, by the late John Charters, Esq.; and the other, an addition to the south-west and another to the north-east wing, at a cost of £2800, by the late Edward Benn, Esq., in 1873. The house contained at 1st November, 1876, 217 inmates, officials included.

The old stock of Belfast have an affection for the Poorhouse—a pride in it—which is not extended in the same degree to any of the other benevolent institutions in the town. It was from the first peculiarly a Belfast object, intended to benefit the old inhabitants when age and poverty overtook them, or young children who had claims on it by reason of birthright. Stories are current of this establishment having afforded shelter and support to those who, in younger and more prosperous days, had themselves contributed to its funds. Hints were occasionally thrown out some years since, both publicly and privately, that a necessity will soon arise for the removal of the Poorhouse to a more genial locality and a purer air. It may be so; such may be its fate, as has been that of great kindred institutions in other places; but surely the time is yet far distant; and, if it were possible in this ever-changing world, the universal wish would be that it should remain for ever where it is, a monument to the charity, zeal, and capacity of its founders, and to the benevolent and disinterested labours of one generation after another of Belfast citizens and professional men who have guided its affairs and secured its prosperity.

LITERARY PERSONS OF BELFAST OF THE EIGHTEENTH  
CENTURY.

It is unsatisfactory to mention that this branch of the subject is much more scanty than could be wished for. No seventeenth century man is known to have distinguished himself in a literary capacity. The present century has been more prolific in eminent persons, most of them still living, and many of them great lawyers. The eighteenth century also was not altogether barren in that department, two natives of the town, at periods distant from each other, having risen to be judges—James Macartney and Chief Baron Joy.

Of the few Belfast men to be included here the first is Dr. William Drennan, son of the Reverend Thomas Drennan, minister of the old Presbyterian Congregation in Rosemary Street. He was born in this town in 1754, and, after completing his studies as a physician, settled in Newry, where he was successful, and practised there for several years, but afterwards went to Dublin. His noble profession does not seem to have been quite congenial to his learning, scholarly tastes, and poetic tendencies. That such was in reality the case is in a manner demonstrated by many parts of his letters.

It was as a political writer that Dr. Drennan is best known, and the Volunteers and the United Irishmen were early indebted to his pen for their ablest addresses and declarations. It is indeed generally admitted that the best political papers which the eventful years of the two societies above named called forth were written by Dr. Drennan. The *Letters of Orellana* were so; and all who desire to study Ireland's history for the last twenty years of the eighteenth century cannot but read with due appreciation the honest reasoning, the classical language, and the energetic style which distinguish these and all his other prose productions. No more disinterested or unswerving politician lived in those days. His poetical pieces are familiar to most persons. Many of these are songs—short flights, brilliant and to the purpose—which took immediate hold on the national

imagination, and have ever since retained their place among the ballad poetry of Ireland. Others are classical and more sustained effusions. They have all been published in a collected form.

Dr. Drennan was tried in 1794 for a seditious libel, but was acquitted. He came to the neighbourhood of Belfast in 1807, where he resided till his death in 1820, taking part, as he had done in his early days, in all that was patriotic, benevolent, and educational in the town. In the last-named relation especially the writer of this too brief sketch well remembers him at the Academical Institution examinations, and at other times when his voice and influence were required to sustain the original principles of the establishment, when the old fire would be reawakened, and when his uncontradicted and unanswerable arguments would be uttered to support and advance the cause of liberal education.

He was interred in the New Burying Ground, Belfast, where his unostentatious grave is still to be seen; and the funeral procession on its way to that place stopped, as he had directed on his death-bed, for a few minutes before the gates of the Academical Institution, which he had so loved and laboured for in life. The inscription on his tomb still exists, and is in these words—

“Pure, just, benign; thus filial love would trace  
The virtues hallowing this narrow space;  
The Emerald Isle may grant a wider claim,  
And link the Patriot with his country's name.”

ALEXANDER HENRY HALIDAY, M.D.—It is perhaps rather stepping out of bounds to place Dr. Haliday among the literary Belfast persons of the last century. He had no great claims to such distinction. He, however, wrote a tragedy—which he submitted to the critical acumen of his friend Lord Charlemont, by whom it was commended—and many poetical pieces. As his reputation and talent in other capacities were so great, it cannot be much out of the way to place his name here beside that of his intimate friend Dr. Drennan, and include in the account some noteworthy particulars.

It is unnecessary to inform the old inhabitants of Belfast who Dr. Haliday was. Others may not know that he was son, like Dr. Drennan, of a minister of the old Rosemary Street Congregation—the Reverend Samuel Haliday—and that during their lives both father and son deserved and received the unbounded respect and esteem of all the inhabitants of the town. Besides the estimation in which Dr. Haliday was held for professional talent, he was intimate and associated with persons of the highest rank in the neighbourhood; he was married to a member of the Edmonstone family of Red Hall; and when he interfered from the best motives with the formidable outbreak of the Hearts of Steel, hereafter to be noticed, he was probably the best known and most influential inhabitant of Belfast. His participation in the popular political movements of the last century are on record in the public annals of the day; and proofs of his liberality, good sense, and geniality of disposition are also existing in private recesses. Two or three extracts from his will, which will be more interesting to most persons than his political actions, may be sufficient evidence of his kindly disposition. This language in a will is at least uncommon, but not the less commendable on that account. After mentioning the larger interests to his wife, he proceeds—

“I leave her also a Legacy of £100 by way of atonement for the many unmerciful scolds I have thrown away upon her at the Whist Table; and I further bequeath to my said dear wife the sum of £500 in gratitude for her having never given on any other occasion from her early youth till this hour any just cause to rebuke or complain of her; and I further leave to my said dear wife a further sum of £100 as an acknowledgment of her goodness in devoting an hour or two every evening, *which she could have so much better employed*, to amuse me with a game of Picket when we happened to be alone, after my decayed eyesight would no longer enable me to write or read much by candle-light.” That was the way Dr. Haliday took to have his grave offences condoned—pleasant words and substantial recompense; but does he write sarcastically in this instance?—“I think my widow will not fix her residence in this town, where, though there are so many persons she highly regards, *the society is so much refined beyond her*

*taste.*" He also says—"I leave my copy of Voltaire's works to my amiable and excellent sister-in-law Miss Dalmonia Edmunstone as a testimony of my warm esteem, and as she has taste and feeling to relish the beauties of that uncommon genius, so she has too sound a judgment to be perverted by his errors."<sup>1</sup>

DOCTOR JOSEPH BLACK.—The family of Black appears to have been one of the very earliest settled in Belfast from Scotland. It derives its principal claim to notice from being that from which Dr. Black, the eminent chemist and philosopher, and Professor of Chemistry in the last century in Edinburgh University, sprang. Dr. Black was not born in Belfast, but in Bordeaux, or else, which is possible, at sea; but the family to which he belonged was settled at Strandmillis, and owned that place and resided there in the present century. His discoveries and labours professionally do not come under notice here. His eminence is well known to the scientific world; but the following letter bearing on his origin and connection with Belfast cannot be read without interest. It is dated—

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Haliday's residence was in Castle Street, probably one of the fine old houses which ran from Castle Place to Fountain Street. The account of his death is curious. It is in one of the excellent letters to Dr. Drennan, who had written to inquire what spiritual aid Haliday had at the closing scene. This is the answer from Mrs. Mattear—"You ask what religious aid Haliday had. . . . Three nights before he died Bruce and I played cards with him, & the very night that was his last he played out the rubber. Now, said he, the game is finished, and the last act near a close; blessed the departing guest and sent his love to her sister; was helped up to bed, comforted his wife, spoke of the blessing her sister and Wm. had been to them the last gloomy winter—and the rest you know."

The same letter contains many other interesting notices. Two are here inserted. "The New Burying Ground is at the back of the Poor House nearly opposite to M'Cabe's. It is a neat place, well laid out and like a garden. Many that day were choosing their resting places, particularly Dissenters. To avoid fees the Corporation would not allow consecration, and Bristow with Isaac Saunders is much hurt." This refers to the time of Dr. Haliday's funeral.

"There is to be a great and novel exhibition here on Sunday. Dr. Bruce is to preach for our Union School. Collectors, Marchioness of Donegall, Lady Mark Kerr, Lady Harriet Skeffington, Mrs. Dickson and Mrs. Drummond. Attending Gentlemen, the Marquis, Lord Mark Kerr, Wm. Skeffington, General Drummond, the Sovereign."

“BELFAST, *August 19th, 1723.*”

“To the Laird of Lamont,  
Nether Cowhall,  
North Britain.

“Honoured Sir,

“I being descended from the ancient name of Black from Scotland for some ages, but my father and many relations being removed by death and to other countries, God is pleased yet to continue me a survivor although very infirm and about seventy six years of age.

“I have been an inhabitant of Belfast for about sixty years, except some intervals when I went abroad to France, Holland, and the West Indies; all which time I have been exercised in merchandising. I was comfortably married to one of the name of *Eccles*, by whom I have five sons and two daughters yet alive, all the former brought up in France and in merchandising. One of them settled a factor and married in Bourdeaux above twenty eight years, and hath a family of eight children.<sup>1</sup> Another is honoured to be King George’s Consul in Spain, where he enjoys both great honour and riches, having a younger brother, a considerable factor, with him for a companion; another was brought up in the college in Glasgow and now abroad; and the fifth with me and one daughter,—the other well married to a merchant here; and we all understanding that we have an interest by alliance in your honourable family, are very desirous, at home or abroad, to demonstrate our dutiful respects to any concerned. My son who is his Majesty’s Consul entreats the favour of you to know the original that the Black hath in the ancient family of Lamont, and likewise your Coat of Arms, which pray afford me by the impression of your seal within a letter, for which I and mine shall remain most thankful. In the mean time pray pardon the question and upon any occasion command, honourable Sir, your obliged and most humble servant,

“JOHN BLACK.”

This letter draws forth a reply from Lamont, addressed “Mr. John Black, merchant, Belfast,” in which, after some introductory matter, the writer explains the origin of the name Black. The words are—“Lamont had a son about 400 or 500 years ago, whose hair, as we have it handed down by tradition, was very black, on

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Joseph Black was one of those eight, consequently the writer of this letter, living in Belfast, was his grandfather.



which account he was called a *Ghiolle dugh*, which is in English the Black Lad." He goes on to say that the name, from the colour of the hair, descended, and that such of the stock as went to England, Ireland, or the Scotch Lowlands called themselves Black, which is a literal translation of *dugh*. This is probably correct. It is indeed the way in which names in old times, and in more recent times as well, have often originated—from some peculiar bodily appearance, from occupation, or from place of abode, or some event in life, or other often trivial cause. Mr. Lamont says nothing of his own family connection with the Blacks of 1723 nor of any other period.

Members and connections of this family of the highest respectability are still in Belfast, and one of them has stated that George Black, who was five or six times Sovereign of Belfast, in 1774-5-6, '82, '83, '85, and Samuel Black, who held the same office in 1779-80, '81, '84, and '89, were both brothers of Dr. Joseph Black.

In an address to the Royal Society of Edinburgh by Dr. Adam Ferguson in 1801, commemorative of Dr. Black's character and his discoveries in science, he says—

"A few years before Mr. Black retired from business, his son Joseph, in the year 1740, being then about twelve years of age, was sent home in order to have the education of a British subject, and having for some years gone to school at Belfast or its neighbourhood, was sent to continue his education at Glasgow College."

The town residence of the Black family, was in Castle Place, where there is now a gun-shop. This is all conclusive evidence that Dr. Black was resident in Belfast for several years in his youth, and that he received his elementary education in the old Belfast School in the Churchyard.

ELIZABETH HAMILTON.—Elizabeth Hamilton was descended from a family of that name which had left Scotland in the days of persecution and settled in the County of Monaghan. Her father seems to have been in business in Belfast, but the nature of that business, or anything connected with it, or with himself indivi-

dually, is nowhere mentioned in Miss Bengers's very imperfect Memoirs of his daughter. We can gather, however, from the work named that he died when Elizabeth was an infant; that the Rev. Mr. Mackay, pastor of the Old or First Presbyterian Congregation in Rosemary Street, was her uncle, her mother's brother; that Mr. Mackay befriended the children, three in number, but that Elizabeth when very young went to an aunt in Scotland, and that her life was spent almost entirely in that country and in England. She was born in Belfast in 1758, as were also most probably her sister and brother; and though she visited the town occasionally, it is most extraordinary to find in her correspondence an utter absence of the slightest remark about it or any person in it. Once, indeed, in 1778, she remarks that the town was all occupied with volunteering. Her eldest sister continued in Belfast, as it is said in the Memoirs that Mr. Mackay, her uncle, received from her in his declining years unremitted filial attention. It is farther noticed that she was one of David Manson's pupils, and that her brother received his education from the Rev. Mr. Garnet of Belfast—another instance of an eminent person issuing from the Belfast School. That brother was Charles Hamilton, who, if he had lived longer, might have acquired a higher name in literature even than his sister Elizabeth. As it was, he was a distinguished scholar, patronised, or rather appreciated, by Warren Hastings and Sir William Jones, "the translator of the Hedaya," and every way eminent in Oriental literature. He was cut off in 1792 at the age of 39, and his sisters erected a large tablet to his memory in the vestibule of the Presbyterian Church in Rosemary Street, where their uncle had officiated, and where it still stands. It has a long inscription describing his character and employments in warm and affectionate terms, and which is printed in full in Miss Bengers's work.<sup>1</sup>

Though dead for sixty years, the works of Elizabeth Hamilton are still well known, and as highly valued perhaps as in her life-

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<sup>1</sup> Vol. i., p. 122.

time. Her friend Miss Edgeworth wrote a strong eulogium on her character and talents at the time of her death, and in publications at the present day her writings are frequently noticed for criticism or commendation. Sundry references to them are in *Notes and Queries*, all laudatory. The publications are—*Letters of a Hindoo Rajah*, 1796; *Modern Philosophers*, 1800; *Letters on the Elementary Principles of Education*, 1801; *Life of Agrippina*, 1804; *Letters on the Formation of the Religious and Moral Principle*, 1806; *Cottagers of Glenburnie*, 1808; *Exercises on Religious Knowledge*, 1809; *Popular Essays*, 1813.<sup>1</sup> These works enunciate sound principles quite in agreement with the admirable character of the writer. One of her living admirers calls for a new edition of them. To most persons Miss Hamilton is best known by her novel or tale, *The Cottagers of Glenburnie*, truly characterised in the *Cyclopædia of Biography* as “a lively and humorous picture of slovenly habits, indolent temper, and the baneful content which prevail among some of the lower classes in Scotland; though only the picture of humble life in a remote and obscure district it can never lose its interest, for the characters are true to nature—essentially, not locally true—and the pathos, the humour, the admirable moral lessons are of all time, independent of the national peculiarities in which they are conveyed.” This is high and well-deserved praise. Her biographer also says of it that “the cheap edition is to be found in every village library, and has provoked many a Scottish housewife into cleanliness and good order.” It is as well known in the north of Ireland, and, it is hoped, has been productive of the same beneficial effects.

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<sup>1</sup> See *Notes and Queries* for 19th July, 1873, p. 55. Also for 1873, pp. 133, 216; and in the volume for 1874, pp. 406, 497; and in February, 1876, p. 135, on her religious opinions.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE OLD STREETS OF BELFAST.

High Street was the early site of the town, consisting of a few mean houses collected on each side of the river. The evidence of the early existence of the street is presumed from the expressions in John Vesey's grant of 1615. Apart from this, it is mentioned by John Bigger in 1668, who sells, as stated in the *Corporate Records*, his half Burgage share on the south side of High Street in that year; and also by George Martin in 1678, who leaves by will small properties in "High Street." Containing the Market House, the original Markets, the Castle, and the Church, it was early deemed, and must still in a sense be considered in its unbroken continuation, the principal street in the town. A view of High Street as it was in the year 1786 has been recently photographed from a drawing made at that time, and is very generally known. It shows apparently one or two thatched houses, people in the costume of the time moving about, the swinging signboards, the irregular buildings, and all the distinctive features of the period. This great street, from the information of an old inhabitant, was commonly called Front Street, as Ann Street was called Back Street, at the end of the last century, and perhaps later. It was also named Fore Street at the end of the seventeenth century.

Skipper Street may have been so called from having been the usual place of residence or temporary lodging of the skippers or masters of the vessels which belonged or traded to the port in early times.

Church Lane was called School-house Lane in the beginning of the eighteenth and also in the seventeenth century, from the great School of Belfast, which was established in this place by the first Earl of Donegall about the year 1666, and which is fully noticed in the account of the Early Educational Establishments of Belfast.

Bridge Street is so named from the bridge which crossed the Town River immediately opposite to it. It was built of stone,

according to its title, and was the largest and most important of the number.

Waring Street derived its name from the Waring family, the great merchants and tanners of the seventeenth century, whose place of business it was. It was sometimes called Broad Street; on other occasions both names are used, as if each end had a separate title, but Waring Street was more general; the other has long been extinct.

The origin of the names Rosemary Lane and Hercules Lane adjoining it can only be conjectured. The former opens up visions of the herb rosemary, of wild flowers or bursting rosebuds that may at one time have found a congenial soil at this spot. It is doubtful, as the name is common in other places.

Sir Hercules Langford is called "of Belfast" so long back as 1669. He was rather a detached inhabitant, though it is possible that by some means Hercules Street may have been so called in his honour. It is certain, however, that both lanes or streets were known by their present names more than 150 years ago.

Bank Lane was so called from the Bank at its entrance, and Cunningham's Row from the house of Mr. Cunningham, also at its entrance; but Crooked Lane was an earlier designation, and that by which it was first known.

North Street received its name from its direction northward. It is an old street and an old name, but the original length was only from Bridge Street to John Street. In 1668 these words are in the *Corporate Records*—"John Bigger sells  $3\frac{1}{4}$  acres in the fields next Gill's Land, and also the plot of land without North Gate Street and next adjoining to the grass of the Rampier situate on the north side of the high way leading from the Town to Pettr's Hill, called Goose Lane." This highway in 1668 we may conclude was but a rough way by which the geese of the town were driven to feed on the waste ground between the rampart and the settlement on Peter's Hill and other elevated places. It proves how old both names are. Why called Peter's Hill, or who or what Peter was, is now, it is to be feared, lost in the mists of Belfast antiquity, and it may possibly be a corrup-

tion from some earlier designation. It is sometimes in old papers spelled Petter's Hill, and once St. Peter's Hill.

Castle Place is a modern title. It seems to have been at one time included in, and formed part of, Castle Street, and was, at the end of the last century, generally called the Parade, as from its width it afforded space for military displays. Castle Street and Mill Street are old names, and their origin obvious, the one from its contiguity to the Castle, and the other from containing or leading to the Manor Mill. Millfield was much what the name expresses—a field attached to the mill; and allusions occur as to its value for bleaching and other useful purposes.

The following notice in *Joy's MSS.* corresponds with that already written in the article on the Old Docks:—

“1712. Hanover Quay formed by Isaac Macartney Mercht. who took off the sea that great lot of ground extending from Weigh House Lane, and comprehending Prince's Street and part of Ann Street. In this undertaking at his personal charge he met with much opposition in consequence of his Whig principles and attachment to the House of Hanover, which feelings he indicated by the names which he gave to his quay and streets.”

Those names were the George and Hanover Quays, Marlborough Street, and Prince's Street, the last in honour of Prince George of Denmark, the husband of Queen Anne.

The origin of the name Ann Street is rather obscure. It suits the position of Catharine Street, in which the first Linen Hall was built in 1739; but that Linen Hall was referred to in 1754 as in Ann Street, and it certainly was so. If the two streets be identical, the name has been changed in the interval between 1739 and 1754.

Talbot Street is supposed to have been so called after Mr. Talbot, a well-known agent for the Donegall estates in 1770. Where no direct proof is procurable in inquiries of this sort, conjecture, when based on any probable foundation, may be permitted.

Arthur Street, so called from the rather curious fact that there were five Earls of Donegall in regular succession for more than



150 years (1647 to 1799) all named Arthur Chichester, in honour of one of whom this street received its name.

Calendar Street is so named from having had in it, or close to it, calendars for smoothing or pressing linen or cotton fabrics.

But there are some names of places of an older date which it would be very desirable to understand. One of these occurs in the will of John Rigby in 1669, in which he bequeaths "his Tuck mill and one half of the Close called the *Governor's Parke*." The Governor and the locality of the "Parke" are equally unknown. Nor has the time when Smithfield was first granted for and used as a market been discovered.

The street which runs from North Street into Smithfield, called indifferently in past times Pipe Lane or Wine Tavern Street, was supposed to have got its former name from being the seat of the pipe manufactory, which, according to the *Presbyterian Burial Register*, existed in the town in the beginning of the last century. Such manufacture, however, must have been somewhere else at first; it could not have been in this place at that time, as in the map of 1792 it would appear not to have been formed, there being no opening in that year leading from North Street into Smithfield from Hudson's Entry to the end of the street.

Union Street is opposite Pipe Lane, and leads from North Street to Donegall Street. It was said to have got its name from having been first opened at the time of the Union, which can scarcely be correct, as it is called Union Street in the map of 1792.

Academy Street was so called after the Academy was opened. Its former name was Linen Hall Lane, from the Linen Hall which stood there. The church ranged at one side of it, and the introduction of this fact gives opportunity for supplementing the few words already written regarding the church, and which tell the exact date of its opening. This is expressed in the newspaper of the day in these words—"Sunday, 27th October 1776—The elegant new Church erected here by the Earl of Donegall was consecrated by the Lord Bishop of Down and Connor, and on Sunday 3rd November a Charity Sermon was preached by the Bishop for the Poor House and £44 4s. 4d. collected."

Names are sometimes of long continuance. The expression "Buller's Fields" is said to have been in use, or known, in 1795, and the origin of the term dates back to the period of the civil wars, when they were really fields or waste ground. They comprised parts of the present York Street, Donegall Street, and Talbot Street. Buller's Row is marked on the map of 1792, and shown as branching off from the old Cow Lane. Buller was a well-known citizen of Belfast in early times.

The Fore and Back Plantations were much more noted localities, though the names are now extinct. They were built by Mr. Waring, and are sometimes called in old documents Waring's Plantation; they were the building speculations of the seventeenth century. The Fore Plantation was much the longer, and in 1792 ran from Waring Street, nearly in the line of the present Victoria Street, to the ship-yard. The Back Plantation was behind it.

Caddell's Entry was known till a few years ago. This is the announcement of its origin—"April 1756. Edward Caddell intends to make a new street from High Street to Rosemary Lane." It had thus an existence of more than a century, and how great the contrast between it and the present magnificent Lombard Street, which is on the same ground, it is quite needless to mention.

Long Lane has been in existence above 150 years. It branches off North Street, and before Church Street, Donegall Street, and York Street were formed, passed from its beginning in North Street, through partial or total wastes, to the Carrickfergus road, thus shortening the way considerably from Belfast to that town, and being then literally what its name describes—a Long Lane. It is now rather a short lane, but the inappropriate title abides.

Lettice Hill is an old name. To the notice of it in the article on the Early Water-Supply of Belfast it may be added that the lease granted of this place in 1702 to Hodgkinson, and renewed in 1716, gives a moiety of Lettice Hill, containing, in the whole, three acres, for £2 10s. 0d. per annum, and describes gardens and

orchards upon it, and that it adjoins my Lord's meadows. Might it be conjectured that this place in the seventeenth century was a resort of Letitia, Countess of Donegall, who lived so long in Belfast, and made it a favourite country retreat so often as to cause it to be known by her name? It is but a guess.

Those who can recollect the town before Victoria Street was formed will remember little Mary Street. Frequent allusions occur to it under its former title of Cow Lane, and though it is scarcely reasonable to mention a street which no longer exists, it is impossible to refrain from alluding to this one, as it contained a town gate through which, it may fairly be conjectured, the cows of the inhabitants were driven to graze upon the lands close by—the great strand-ground of the Warings and others—and hence the very appropriate name of Cow Lane.

Corn Market is a comparatively modern title. The street was known in the olden time by the name of Shamble Street, from the Shambles having been in it or adjoining to it.

The Castle Place corner of Corn Market was a great meeting-spot a century ago. It was called Paddy Gaw's Corner, from a person of that name whose shop was there.

The entries or passages, generally off High Street, are in many cases of considerable antiquity. The only really old one, perhaps, which retains its first name is Pottinger's Entry, which dates from the beginning of the last century, or much before, and is possibly coeval almost with the first of the family in Belfast.

The names of the more recent streets, not those originated in the present century, but others of a respectable age, would lead to very long descriptions. York Street was first called Duke Street, both names being commemorative of the Duke of York, second son of George the Third. Fountain Lane was once called Water Street; and many such instances could be found.

It is not necessary to mention the names of streets and places bestowed in honour of the noble house of Chichester, which are obvious; much less the legion which have been springing up in every direction during the last quarter of a century—so numerous that there seems almost a difficulty in finding names for them.

## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE TOPOGRAPHY OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Y<sup>T</sup> has not been possible to procure any map of Belfast of the early part, or even of the middle, of the eighteenth century, to show its progressive size, and to assist in forming indisputable ideas of its topographical condition at different intervals. Other evidence, however, not less interesting and reliable, is accessible to supply the deficiency. It may be mentioned that ground was reclaimed from the sea at the beginning of the era referred to; that docks of a sort were formed, and that the improvements of the Earl of Donegall probably stimulated the inhabitants to make some necessary changes in the town. The "Rampier," no longer required, nor ever again expected to be required for defensive purposes, was disturbed in its sluggish course, though it still existed in detached places in the current century. The few streets were extended, and small alterations crept slowly forward; but about the year 1751 a period of depression fell upon the town. In that year Arthur, fourth Earl of Donegall, was fifty-six years of age, a childless widower, and infirm in health. His presumptive heir was his nephew Arthur, son of his brother John, and who eventually became fifth Earl and first Marquis of Donegall. John Chichester had died in 1746, leaving the above-named Arthur and two other children, all minors, under the guardianship of their mother. She also died in the following year (1747), and the guardianship of the minors then devolved upon Sir Roger Newdigate, their uncle, the brother of their late mother; and on John Ludford, who, as well as John Chichester, had married a sister of Sir Roger, and who was consequently also their uncle by marriage. Considerable family

dissension immediately arose, both in connection with the guardianship of the minors, and the alleged incapacity of the Earl to manage his own affairs. An application was made to the Lord Chancellor for a Commission of Lunacy against Lord Donegall, which, on due examination, was refused, or at least not carried to extremity, though it was admitted "that his Lordship had not been much used to business or to the care of his estates and concerns;" and indeed, as Belfast tradition avers, and as the legal documents arising from the disputes which followed tend to confirm, he was, to say the least, rather weak and incapable. Newdigate appears all through to have desired the lunacy of Lord Donegall to be established with the view, it was surmised, of obtaining unlimited or chief control over the estates of his nephew, who was in 1751 twelve years old. He was overruled in this, and, after interminable arguments and pleadings, still preserved in voluminous papers, a settlement was arrived at, appointing as trustees Mr. Ludford and Mr. Barry, the latter of whom was nephew of Lord Donegall, being the eldest son of his only surviving sister, the Countess of Barrymore.

This brief relation explains the influence and position of the two trustees in their dealings with the town. An Act of Parliament was sought for, founded on the trust deed. Belfast was specially interested in these events; and the arguments that were used exhibit in a very forcible light its actual condition. The object of the Act was to enable the trustees to make leases "at the Town of Belfast for three lives or ninety nine years or such other Leases or grants as are therein mentioned in order to promote or encourage the *Rebuilding* of the said Town." Matters were at rather a low ebb in 1751 and some few following years, when so marked an expression as the *rebuilding* of the town was adopted, and its use was really not without considerable foundation. In the papers connected with this business it is described to be old and ruinous; and a declaration is made, as coming from the inhabitants themselves, or a portion of them, that if they cannot obtain favourable leases



“they will immediately leave the town and settle in Newry or Lisburn.” By the advocates for the Act it was alleged—

“That while opposition is kept up Belfast may be almost deserted, the Trade lost, and the Estate of the Family impaired and lessened instead of being improved by leasing and rebuilding the Town, which will be a great loss to Lord Donegall, but a much greater to the Infants, the care of whose interests seems only to be made a pretence for this personal opposition to their Guardians.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Roger Newdigate was the opposer, but he had supporters in Belfast, as the following letter from Lord Massareene to Mr. Ludford proves. It is principally valuable for its topographical information, and the confirmation given by the writer of the low state to which Belfast had come. Lord Massareene was cousin to Lord Donegall, and had also been appointed a trustee.

“DUBLIN, *March 26th, 1752.*

“SIR,

“The last packet brought me the favour of yours and Mr. Barry’s letter. I own I am greatly surprised at this unexpected opposition from Sr Roger Newdigate to the Bill, which in my opinion is absolutely necessary for the good of the Donegal estate. I live in the neighbourhood of Belfast and know it to be in a ruinous condition, and will loose both its Trade and Inhabitants if it is not speedily supported by proper Tenures. I cannot imagine that Sr Roger can possibly succeed in this application for a second Enquiry into L<sup>d</sup> Donegal’s Sanity. I think the Chancellour is so well apprised of every thing that has been done & knows it has been so well intended that I cannot suppose he will now go into a fresh Enquiry. I shall most readily concur in everything that you and Mr. Barry propose, which I dare say will be for the good of the Family which I am sensible you have both at heart as much as I have. I have never seen the Deed of Trust yet. When I have you shall know my intentions with regard to taking any part in it, but you may depend upon it that whether I act under the trust or not I shall always be ready to give up my time and advice for the assistance of the Donegal affairs, while ever you and Mr. Barry are concerned, which I make no doubt of continuing, notwithstanding this Attack, which I am very sure underhand comes from that little fellow Macartney, & must beg of you to beware of him, and upon no account ever to compromise with him, for take my word for it, if you do, you will repent it. . . .

“I am Sir with great regard  
yr. most obdt. Servt.

“MASSEREENE.”

(*Pinkerton MSS.*)

This great dispute brings out some interesting pieces of information. In a note to a paper of arguments it is said—“The Trusts of this Deed were to apply but £1500 a year for Lord Donegall’s own support, and to pay a few simple contract debts, and then to set apart and accumulate all the rest of the Rents of his Lordship’s Estate, being about £5000 a year during all his Lordship’s Life for the benefit of his youngest nephew.” It does not say that this sum included the



The Bill was printed, and is among the papers from which the preceding information has been obtained. It states broadly and specifically, in fuller measure even than the inhabitants in the petition which they had presented, that—

“The town of Belfast belongs to, and is the sole property of the Earl of Donegall; that it is a Town Corporate and a free port; that a considerable trade and commerce in the Linen manufacture hath for several years last past been carried on in and about the said Town, and that the number of Inhabitants hath by that means greatly increased, but as most of the Leases granted by the ancestors of the said Earl are now near expiring the Houses have been suffered to go out of repair, and are so very old, ruinous, and unfit for habitation that it is become necessary for the Preservation and Support of the Trade of the Town and for preventing the Inhabitants from quitting and deserting the same, that the said Houses should be rebuilt. . . . But as the Earl of Donegall is only Tenant for Life of the said Town and Estate, is advanced in years, very infirm, and very much incumbered with debts, and is utterly incapable to undertake the Rebuilding of the Town at his own expense, power is sought for to enable such Leases to be given as may induce others to do so.”

The preceding forms the broad picture of the topographical condition of Belfast in the middle of the last century. The trusteeship was confirmed, and the minute strokes which compose the details soon appeared in applications for fresh leases, in melancholy descriptions of houses and premises, and directions of trustees and agents. These are very numerous, and afford

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Donegall Estates or the county of Antrim property only; and there must be error somewhere, as Arthur Young, about 1776 (*Tour in Ireland*, p. 57), in estimating the value of the estates of Irish absentees, places those of Lord Donegall at the very head of the list, making the rental the great amount of £31,000 a-year. It is true this was twenty years, or rather more, after the low condition of Belfast was calling forth such active measures for amendment, and the great crisis of 1770–71, hereafter to be noticed, was in the interval; still it is hard to believe that in so short a time even the entire of the Donegall estates could have risen to be so great as Arthur Young represents. At any rate, this £5000 a-year in 1751 was most likely to have comprised all the Donegall estates, Belfast included, which town produced to the family rental according to Young, in or about 1776, £2000 a-year, and of consequence much less in 1751. In further proof of the value of the Donegall estates in the last century, they are put down in a work called “List of Absentees, Dublin, 1730,” as value for £4000 a-year at that time.

glimpses, not less curious than authentic, of the state of several parts of Belfast from 1751 to 1757. The salient points of a few applications only can be noticed, but one is given nearly in full as an example, affording a view of the condition and estimated value of what is now a populous and busy portion of a well-known street 120 years ago, and the names of many past residents. It is the memorial of Stephen Radcliff, Esq., Barrister-at-Law to the Earl of Donegall, and Richard Barry, Esq., and John Ludford, Esq., the trustees, showing—

“That Arthur late Earl of Donegall by Indenture bearing date the 17th day of January 1698 did Demise unto Richard Radcliff your Memorialist's Grandfather all that Messuage and Dwelling House wherein Francis Radcliff dwelt, together with the Dye House thereunto adjoining, . . . situate between the Highway leading to the Mills of Belfast on the South, a Garden Plot late Richard Bayle's and John Shernon on the West, with the Water Course or River which falleth and runneth from the said Mills of Belfast on the North; and also that part of the then late Bowling Green whereon were the Houses of Robert Townsend, James Echlin, Clerk, John Eatenby, George and Richard Ashmore and George Portis. Bounded on the East with the Tenement late Francis Vibious and afterwards possessed by Oliver Lawrence. And also all that part or portion of one Plot of Ground which was in the possession of the said Francis Radcliff in Belfast between the said Highway on the South, the Garden belonging to the Mills on the West, and the said River on the North. On the East with the Rampier, . . . and Extending backwards to the River upon which were Madam M'Cartney's Kiln and House, Sarah Martin's Tenement, Castor Pit's 2 Tenements, Robert Hetley's, John Buck's, Widow Taylor's, Robert Murray and Richard Curle's, for the term of 61 years from the first day of November then last past at the yearly rent of Forty Shillings Sterling and £2 as an Herriot at the death of every chief Tenant. . . . That as your Memorialist's Interest in said Tenements is near expiring, and your Memorialist does intend to Rebuild and improve said Tenements, they being now very old, your Memorialist humbly proposes to surrender said Lease so made to said Richard Radcliff to which your Memorialist is now entitled, and to take a Lease for 41 years at the Rent of Fifteen Pounds a year.”

Are there any representatives or descendants of these numerous inhabitants of Castle Street and Mill Street now residing there

or elsewhere in the town? The representative of Mr. Radcliff, the small woollen manufacturer and blue dyer, had risen to be a lawyer, though the memorial is not clearly expressed. For all this extensive property, however, beginning apparently in Castle Street, below the present Chapel Lane, and extending towards the Mills, forty shillings a-year had been the original rent; but now, as time advanced, he thought he might venture to offer £15 per annum for the entire. At the end of the memorial Mr. Radcliff describes these tenements "as situate in the out Skirts of the Town, and not fit for the habitation of Shopkeepers." Half-a-century before, the property had formed a rural suburb—a pleasant social neighbourhood occupied by such inhabitants as the Vicar of Belfast, Mr. Portis, the Ashmores, and Madam Macartney, probably the widow of the first George Macartney, and others; but in 1757 its fragrance was dissipated; decay and ruin had succeeded. £15 a-year would appear but a small rent for so large a tract, and yet John Gordon, the agent, to whom the trustees referred the case for consideration, has written at the foot of the petition that it was "a considerably higher rent in proportion than the other side of the street is set for."

Other proposals, in proof of the material state of premises and the price proposed for sites, are briefly narrated. There are many such from which to choose.

"John Ferguson Shoemaker proposes to give for his tenement in North Street, forty feet in front and extending back 78 feet to Hercules Lane, with a view of rebuilding the same, 1s. 6d. per foot."

"Widow Bailie, stating that she is supporting herself and family by brewing and retailing malt liquor in Castle Street, where she and her late husband had built a Brewhouse and two other houses, all out of *wast ground*, proposes to give for a new Lease 2s. per foot for 45 feet of frontage, extending back to the river 64 feet."

John Hunter, cooper, North Street, desirous of rebuilding, and prepared to do so, offers two shillings per foot, his frontage being forty-five feet, and extending back seventy-nine feet to Hercules Lane. From his petition it can be gathered that the rent in the

expired lease of 1715 was sevenpence per foot, which shows a progressive advance. The cooper gives rather a dolorous account of North Street houses, if all were like his, which is very likely to have been the case. He says his own house and that of a neighbour who had relinquished in his favour were both "thatch'd Cabbins not to be lived in much longer as the premises in part had fallen down and the rest upon props and coming down," and makes fair promises to rebuild, "conformable to the other new houses built or to be built."

In 1717 a lease was made to a person called Dixon of four thatched cabins and "one low slate house" in Church Lane for £3 10s. 0d. a-year, a provision in which is, and which was usual at the time, "that he was not to build or suffer to be built on the premises any Popish Mass House, or any Meeting House or Conventicle different from the Established Church under the penalty of having his Rent increased to £300 a-year"—an all-sufficient prohibition to keep at a respectful distance both the priest and the Presbyterian minister. When 1756 arrived, and new leases were being given, the then owner, desirous of contributing his share to the rebuilding of the town, petitioned for a renewal, proposing, for a frontage of ninety-five feet in Church Lane, 1s. per foot, the tenements thereon being entirely ruinous, "only very old rotten Cabbins, in absolute immediate need of being rebuilt."

John M'Kelvey, distiller, Castle Street, offers 1s. 6d. per foot for his own and several other tenements, "all low ruinous thatch'd Cabbins."

The petitions clearly prove the dilapidation of at least many parts of the town, the inconsiderable nature of the original houses in it, and the value attached to premises at the period. Even in High Street the proposed prices are not higher. There is an offer to the trustees from James Bigger, proposing to pay £3 0s. 0d. a-year for his house, shop, and sheds in High Street and Bigger's Entry. The extent of frontage is not clearly expressed, but it was most likely one of the original Burgage shares. In 1756 it was in three divisions—namely, the shop of Mr. Mussenden, that of

James Burgess, and that of Bigger, the petitioner. There is written upon the back of this memorial—"Upon Inquiry finding that Biggar's is a much better part than Burgess' we cannot consent to less than £6 a year." This is signed by Mr. Barry and Mr. Ludford, and the three shopkeepers paid, as may be inferred, for shops, sheds, and in two of the cases for their dwelling-houses, as shown on a sketch map attached to the memorial, in the best part of the most important business street in the town, something about £6 a-year each, or possibly less.

The bustle consequent on the rebuilding of Belfast led to such items as the following. Mr. Gordon, the agent, reports to the trustees on 14th March, 1757—"The Brick grounds abt ye Town are most part run out, and Brick will be much wanted. . . . The Buildings go on slowly at present for want of Brick." Gordon had stated that he knew of a place in the Demesne—another name for the meadows and gardens attached to the ruined Castle—where there was some good clay, that he was restrained from setting the ground on that account, and asking for instructions; on which Mr. Ludford advises "that every thing should be done to encourage building, and that it was therefore very proper such a piece of ground should be reserved." They knew little about the resources of Belfast in the matter of brick-clay.

Mr. Adair makes application for a certain tenement or field, the situation of which is easily discovered; and Mr. Gordon, being desired to report on the application, thus writes—"If the Trustees think proper A New Street called Barry Street will run thro' this Field for it lyes in the heart of the Town." In writing to Mr. Gordon, directing him to be particular about setting it, and to inform the trustees of its value, he replies, under the date of 23rd April, 1757—"In my Report I mentioned a Street laid out to run thro' this Field part of which is already built by Callwell. If ye Trustees set Remdr for Grazing it is worth 40 Shillings an acre, but if for building it is worth much more." This refers to the present Berry Street, originally Barry Street, called so after Mr. Ludford's co-trustee, the ground



encompassing which was merely pasture, and at this time, therefore—or in the year 1757—the town cows were cropping the buttercups and daisies, and more succulent herbage as well, possibly in pleasant fields and sweet-smelling lanes around the purlieus of Smithfield and adjoining places, not quite so pastoral in these latter days.

In 1757 the way from the present Castle Place to Hercules Lane, as it was then and long afterwards called, could have been only a foot-passage—at least it is difficult to take any other meaning out of the application which follows. There is still a narrow irregular turn at this place, and some explanation of its state in 1756 is perhaps afforded by this joint petition of Robert Wilson and James Trail to the trustees. They say—

“A considerable time agoe your Petitioners were looking out for a propper Spott of Ground to build on, and were informed by your agent Mr. Gordon that there was an opening to be made from Castle Street to Hercules Lane, which would widen it at least 22 feet; and seeing the advantage this would be to that part of the Town by giving it a Communication with the Body of the Town w<sup>ch</sup> it could never otherwise have, & upon your Agent Mr. Gordon Possitively Engaging that this should be put in execution, your Petitioners proposed to your Lordship and Hon<sup>rs</sup> for two different Lotts of Ground in said Lane which your Lordship and Hon<sup>rs</sup> were pleased to Grant.”

They proceed to say in their long memorial that, relying on the agent's good faith, they had begun to build, but had now learned to their great consternation that a new lease had been given to Robert Legg of two houses in Castle Street without obliging him to perform the agreement they had reckoned on, which was to rebuild and set back the said houses, in order to give into Hercules Lane, where their buildings were to be, the required open of twenty-two feet, and the non-performance of which would still render the lane inaccessible “from the body of the town.” They obtained, however, it may be supposed, the opening as it now is.<sup>1</sup> At this place there were large stepping-

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<sup>1</sup> Copies of these proposals for new leases are among the *Pinkerton MSS.*



stones to cross the open river, and adjoining which there was—very possibly where the Bank Buildings now stand—a small street called Paradise Row. Neither of these facts, as it is presumed they are, is preserved in any written document, both being founded on tradition only.

The streets in the middle of the last century were very imperfectly paved, or not paved at all. The probable condition of North Street, the most important then in the town except High Street, may be inferred from the newspaper of the day, a letter in which reports that “several servants have of late insolently rode along the sides of the houses in North Street to the great danger of the inhabitants, particularly children. It is requested that gentlemen do order their servants to keep the middle of the street with their cattle.” The correspondent might have let us know that the sides of the houses alone afforded a semblance of firm footing to men and horses. Some years before this, or at the beginning of the century, it is traditionally stated Bridge Street was not paved, the roadway of clay being kept passable by being covered often with quantities of “whins” from the neighbouring hills. No authentic evidence proves this, and it may well be questioned. It is a tradition only. The open river in High Street led to many casualties. It was altogether uncovered, and a few great trees were still growing on its banks.

The streets were almost impassable from filth, and full of holes, so that with these pleasant avenues and the “thatch’d cabbins,” and the “rebuilding of the town” in progress, the prospect did not delight the eye. This picture is not all from hearsay or tradition. Much of it is a description of the topographical or surface aspect of the town as written by those who then resided in it. The representation of the state of the streets is quite truthful, and in which condition they long afterwards remained. The ineffective method of remedying the evil is mentioned in a Presentment from the Grand Jury of the Manor of Belfast, on 25th May, 1764, setting forth that—

“We present the several dunghills, rubbish, and filth *lying, or hereafter to be laid down*, in the streets of Belfast to be a public nuisance.

And it is our opinion that agreeable to the laws of the land every person is at liberty to take and carry away such filth and rubbish, and apply the same to his own use, and the Sovereign will grant warrants to every one who will remove the same."

This procedure was followed up a few months after by a mild remonstrance to the effect—

"That the streets of this town are in many places still shamelessly encumbered with dunghills, rubbish, and filth notwithstanding the late presentment of the Grand Jury. Besides the hurt hereby received to the health of the inhabitants and other inconveniences arising therefrom we are reproached for this by all strangers."<sup>1</sup>

But sanitary laws were then unheard of; strict compulsory police regulations in the far distance; and even that useful class of men, the public scavengers, were to all appearance yet unknown. To add a few more dark tints to this rather repulsive description of the streets of Belfast, it may be stated that the river was periodically scoured, and added occasionally its accumulations to the private deposits. In 1761 it is announced that—

"As the river has been lately cleared, it is requested that those who live opposite thereto, may as far as in their power prevent any thing from being thrown into it. The dirt which has been taken out of the river will be very good manure and will answer also for filling up waste ground." This is almost the seventeenth century renewed.

The river was crossed by bridges, the names of some of which have been transmitted to us. One was the Sluice Bridge at Skipper Street, intended to restrain the tidal water, and form there an occasional or enlarged dock. The Stone Bridge was probably the most important spot in the town. It was the mart—the place of public intelligence. Joy's Entry, close beside it, was called in the last century Exchange Court, or Change Alley, from the Exchange being at its entrance. The merchants had their dwellings quite at hand, and had not far to

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<sup>1</sup> *Belfast News-Letter*, 7th August, 1764.

go to hear the news or transact business. The place was called shortly "The Bridge," by which name all the people in the town knew it. Not only did the merchants meet there to settle their weighty affairs, but also the labouring classes in search of employment. Even in this century, when a labourer was wanted, the usual direction was to send to the "Bridge" for a man, though the bridge, when this was spoken, had disappeared, the place where it was having been long deserted both by men and merchants, one class having apparently followed the other to what was then the New Exchange—the present Belfast Bank—the labourers waiting there on the footway for hire at an imaginary bridge, as they appear to do still in small numbers. Several regulations and remarks respecting the markets have already appeared in proof of High Street having been from the earliest times the market grounds of the town. Here is another which shows the importance of the Stone Bridge. Stephen Havon, the Sovereign in 1770, directs that—

"Potatoes, seeds, oats, barley, peas and beans be sold at the Market House, and in the street before it. Fresh butter, cheese, fish, pigs, geese, turkeys, hens, eggs, chickens, wild fowl, conies and other dead victual in no other place but High Street, and on the Bridges built over the River from Pottinger's Entry to the west end of the Stone Bridge, where the yarn measurers, town sergeants, and overseers of the market will be, to weigh butter, count suspected yarn, oversee and prevent disorders and disputes."

Even in the current century all this had not ceased. There are persons still living who have seen on Friday mornings Corn Market, High Street, and Castle Place crowded with country people selling their produce to the inhabitants of the town. The dregs of the ancient markets still lingered at their original sites—the old Market House and the Castle Gate. It is well worth recording that the Exchange of Belfast, as it existed in the eighteenth century, is yet to be seen; the substantial steps which formed its approach, as they stood in the olden time when thronged by the merchants of other days; when auctions were proceeding on the Bridge, when the primitive

Post Office was close by, the *News-Letter* printed in an adjoining court,<sup>1</sup> the markets spreading around, and the sergeants and town officers stationed to preserve order. All the entries, as they are called, between High Street and the streets on each side which run parallel with it, have their own associations. The names were bestowed on them either from the persons who first opened them through the gardens, and who made them famous in a local way by the extent of their business, or from those whose shops were at their entrance or within their precincts. Many lanes and entries mentioned in old papers are now altogether unknown. They have been swept away by modern improvements, or the names have been lost as other possessors or occupants arose to the surface.

Another spot, almost as well known as the Bridge, was the *Four Corners*, a name which, it is probable, scarcely a dozen inhabitants of the town have ever heard, or of which they could tell the meaning. It was a clear space where the Belfast Bank now stands, not having literally four corners, but four streets opening upon it—namely, Waring Street, Bridge Street, Rosemary Street, and North Street. So it was when Donegall Street had no existence, and when Banks and Commercial Buildings and the other structures around were still in the future. It was a place, perhaps the chief one in the town, in which open-air assemblages of the inhabitants were held, for which it was well adapted from its space and central situation. Magee, one of the booksellers and publishers of the last century, sometimes advertises a book on sale at his shop

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<sup>1</sup> The old *News-Letter* office, and in which so many of the Belfast books were printed, is still in existence, though now tottering to its fall. It is in a small irregularly-shaped court off Joy's Entry, and is a tolerably large building, the windows broken, the walls crumbling, and all in a state of utter dilapidation, ready for a change which will soon happen. What is said in the text regarding the first and early Exchange of Belfast is, however, no longer applicable. It has disappeared within the last few months, to make way for premises more in character with the locality. It was directly behind the shop of Mr. Greer when his place of business was in High Street; it is separated from the court in which the *News-Letter* printing-office was by an iron gate, though the two buildings were but a few yards distant from each other.

in Bridge Street, "near the Four Corners." The name often occurs in advertisements and elsewhere. In 1768 there is an advertisement for foundation-stones for building "A Market House at the Four Corners." When the building was projected it was sometimes called the New Market House, sometimes the Assembly Rooms, as if its original destination or use were still unsettled. But the first stone of the building was laid at the noted spot here described by Mr. Talbot, the agent, with great ceremony, in honour of the birth of the late Marquis of Donegall, on the day on which the news of that event reached the town—namely, the 22nd August, 1769. The building was erected at the sole expense of the Earl, and the laying of the first stone was attended with the usual rejoicings, the principal inhabitants marching to the ceremony from the Castle, and there were illuminations at night in honour of the great event. It long constituted the principal place which Belfast contained for public meetings or convivial assemblies, and was the Exchange of the town. Even the occupation of the space by building did not extinguish the old familiar name of the Four Corners, which was still popular among aged inhabitants at the end of the last century. To make the day more memorable—

"Mr. Thomas Greg laid the corner foundation stone next the sea of the new Kay which he is building on the north side of the dock of Belfast. This Kay is 320 feet in length, and when finished will give room for the accommodation of a much greater number of ships and in deeper water than heretofore; and Mr. Greg in commemoration of the birth of Lord Chichester hath called the said Kay Chichester Kay."

Opposite the New Exchange at the Four Corners stood a few mean houses, on the site of which the Commercial Buildings have been erected. Some of them at least were but one story high even in this century, and what appearance they had in 1769 it would be difficult to conjecture. Thatch, there is little doubt, covered most of them at that period, which may be partly confirmed by the reminiscences of an old lady still living at the age of 92, who affirms that in 1797, or perhaps a few years earlier, "on one side of Donegall Street the houses were thatched

with straw." This, from the context, was that side on which the church is. Such statement is barely reconcilable with the great flourish which announced the proposed construction of Donegall Street itself. This now most important street was first shaped out only in 1754, of which here is the short but sufficient evidence—

"Six or seven houses are now building, and will be finished this season on the ground laid out for a New Street, and many others next spring. . . . The New Street will be very handsome—600 yards long, 60 feet wide, and the houses three stories high. The Linen Hall ranging on one side of the street about the centre will add to its beauty. The foundation of the wall enclosing the ground on which the Hall is to be built is mostly laid, and a row of rooms are building on one side which will be finished this season."<sup>1</sup>

The Linen Hall here referred to was that which stood where St. Anne's Church now is—the second Linen Hall of the town. Donegall Street was not so called in 1754, the term New Street distinguishing it in the meantime, as was the practice in some other cases till a permanent name was agreed on. That this street with so fine a beginning should have had, forty years after, thatched cabins in the best part of it is rather remarkable, but it must be accepted as a fact, though their number may not have been very great.

Peter's Hill was a favourite residence—at least it may be presumed to have been so, when John Brown, the Sovereign of Belfast, resided on it. This was so lately as the year 1795. Previously, and from the earliest times, it was distinguished for gardens and orchards, and all rural sights and sounds. Races and bull-baitings were held on the hill, which was really at one period some considerable distance from the main part of the town.

Two other names of the old time, now entirely forgotten, are the Back of the Green and the Back of the River. The former was applied to the part of Ann Street lying between Corn

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<sup>1</sup> The above extract relating the original formation of Donegall Street is in the *News-Letter* of September, 1754.



Market and Church Lane, to the rear of the tenements which fronted High Street, and reached to the water; the latter to the north side of the river from the present Bank Lane some distance up towards the mill. The Back of the River is a designation easily understood; the Green is less clear, both in its uses and exact locality. A ferry was traditionally near the end of the present Ann Street, and the Green is mentioned as being held by the person who managed the boat. No proof of the time when this was, or any particulars of it, have been obtained, though of course it was before the building of the late Long Bridge. The term "Green" could only refer to the hue of the surface. In the seventeenth century the ground at the back of High Street was laid out in the town gardens, and it was the same between High Street and Waring Street, as will be seen on the map of 1685. But coming to the days now under review, an old resident, who died some years since above ninety years of age, was accustomed to tell how she remembered gardens with fruit trees, not at the back, but in front of the houses in High Street. Another venerable lady still living says that "she remembers the left side of High Street open from Bridge Street to the Quay, and a brawling little stream of water running through it." This was the Farset of ancient days, the Belfast River of modern times. Such statements must appear remarkable, at least to those who only know that street in its present importance and magnificence, when every foot, almost every inch, of frontage has its price—when it is all purely and specially a business street. In the middle of the last century, and even in this, there were many private residences in it. At the former period it was customary for the gentry who resided in the country in summer to have houses in the town to which they removed in winter. These houses were in Castle Place, High Street, Bridge Street, and elsewhere, so that the town formed then, small as it was, a little provincial capital.

The contrast is in no case more remarkable than that between the shops of the past and present. The dark dingy apartments of former years, many of them with little bow windows and a

flight of outside steps to reach the entrance, and the magnificent arcades, bazaars, and emporiums of this day, so wide, light, and spacious, can hardly be realised. Not less so the shopkeepers of old, who were so small in their habits and ideas that when leaving the town to renew their stock of goods would shut up the little shops altogether, taking care, however, to announce in the newspaper, or by a placard on the closed window, that the owner had gone to Dublin or elsewhere, but would return in a few days.

Church Street had a beginning only with the erection of the Church. So recently as the year 1794 there is an advertisement of ground in North Street to be let on reasonable terms for building, and described as "that extensive Lot extending in front from Long Lane northward 227 feet; also that part of Church Street now opening which runs through the centre of the above lot, commencing at North Street, and joining the houses already finished." The Rampart ran across Church Street, as it is described by a person who had seen it about the end of the century as still there in his day, and serving, he says, as the Rubicon between the Donegall Street and North Street boys in their games or sportive combats.<sup>1</sup> If as large there as in other places the Rubicon was a dangerous spot for the boys. It must, however, have been in the upper part of Church Street, as Donegall Street was nearly the line of the Rampart, and into which it entered from the former street. Its course is proved by the fact that in an Encumbered Estates Sale some years ago, the property formerly occupied by Patrick Davis, in North Street, about sixty yards below Long Lane, is described as "extending in rear to the Rampart 130 feet," and the line of the old defence is laid down on the map attached to the deed of sale as the outbounds of the tenement, though for generations it had been practically unknown.<sup>2</sup>

In 1769, and many years later, the Castle Gardens and the Castle Meadows were still in all their luxuriance. In that year

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<sup>1</sup> From "Letters of an Octogenarian."

<sup>2</sup> *Pinkerton MSS.*

there are advertisements that "seven or eight ill disposed persons armed with staves and poles attacked the watchman in the Castle Gardens;" or that "the walls of the Castle Gardens were broken over;" and a reward was offered for the apprehension of the perpetrators. The gardens reached to the water-side, and the meadows extended over a great tract of the ground occupied now by some of the finest buildings and streets which the town contains. Donegall Place, Donegall Square, and other streets adjoining were gardens or meadows with shady walks and pleasant groves; and the water approached so nearly to their southern side that it was stated some years since, by an old person who was witness of the fact, that Lord Donegall's pleasure-boat was moored about the present Arthur Street. But the ruthless builder was preparing to mar all these beauties. On the 17th of May, 1784, there is advertised "a Plan of the intended new Street leading from Castle Street (now Castle Place) to the White Linen Hall which may be seen at the Castle Office where building proposals will be immediately received." This was the present Donegall Place, intended for the private houses of the wealthy inhabitants of the town, and which it continued to be for about half-a-century. It is not very many years since that not a single shop, hotel, or place of business of any kind existed in it. The leading gentry had exclusive possession, Lord Donegall's own house being that at the corner, now the Royal Hotel. But a more extended account of the opening of Donegall Place through the Castle Gardens, and the great projects in connection with it, must be put on record:—

"June 3rd 1785. The ground for building the New Street from our White Linen Hall to the Parade is now thrown open, and brick and other materials for the work laid down, so that we may expect to see some of the lots completely built on in course of this summer. The several Tenants being restricted to follow a regular building plan this New Street will be perfectly uniform. The Entrance from the Parade to the right and left will be finely introduced by elegant iron Pallisading and adequate Globe Stands raised from clean brick walls coped with free stone in front of Lord Donegall's and the Collector's houses

curving beautifully towards the northern ends of each. The new buildings to commence at the southern extremity of said Pallisading, and run forward to the banks of the intended Canal which is to pass in front of the Linen Hall, and so separate said Street from that great Building the view of which forms a pleasant termination to the South. A Draw Bridge will be thrown across the Canal in front of the Hall, and another range of Buildings incline to the East along the Banks of the Canal Quay. The New Street to be 80 feet wide. . . . This noble undertaking promises to be eminently useful and ornamental to the thriving town of Belfast."

These grand schemes were not executed, the building of the street excepted. The beautiful pallisading and the adequate globe stands were left to be perfected by the next generation, the members of which appear to have neglected the duty, as far on in this century there were plain brick walls of considerable height where these ornamental objects were to be; but, above all, the intended canal with its quay and drawbridge never went beyond a paper representation. To that extent the canal, passing in front of the Linen Hall, is shown on maps of the period; so certain did its completion appear, that the sanguine map-marker imagined he might safely stamp it as an accomplished fact.<sup>1</sup> It was a misjudged project, and not advocated by those who had true conceptions of the way in which the shipping influence of Belfast should turn. If such a scheme had been effected, it would, long before this day, have been obliterated as unsuitable and unsightly.

The ruins of the Castle of Belfast, adjoining Donegall Place, were well remembered by old inhabitants now no longer in life. A modern house still remains on the ground, though changed in use. It was the rent office and residence of the agent; but the Castle of Belfast, renovated by the great Lord Deputy, and occupied by his successors through several generations; the famed gardens in which King William perambulated, and all

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<sup>1</sup> This circumstance has misled many, the writer among the number, who was long bewildered about this canal which never had existence. The *News-Letter* gives an account of the scheme as above copied, and Mr. Joy's notes on the fly-leaf state that the canal part of it was never attempted to be carried out.

which excited words of admiration from that phlegmatic monarch, are as utterly blotted from the face of the earth as if they had never existed. A market-place, close buildings, offices, large streets, and busy shops, now are where the greatest in the land enjoyed life, courted repose, or passed the rejoicing hours.

Various notices have been made about a part of the town which has been as much changed as any other within the last hundred years. This is the embouchure of the Blackstaff; Cromack, and Cromack Woods. These places seem to have been favourites of the third Earl of Donegall. In his earlier days he exhibited most praiseworthy activity in making improvements in the town, and appears to have much resided here from 1693 to 1700. They were years of scarcity, and he devised plans to employ the people in productive labour. The most important of these was the changing of the course of the Blackstaff, by making a straight cut from the place at which the old Paper Mill afterwards stood direct into the Lagan, thus reclaiming a vast space of ground. "He also made the Long Bank running from one extremity of the town to the Lagan, greatly improved and enlarged the Castle Gardens, and laid out extensive pleasure grounds through the woods of Cromack, opening up six wide avenues called the Passes, which diverged from a central point, and were appropriated to the recreation of the inhabitants of Belfast."<sup>1</sup> These avenues continued as they were originally made through the thick woods of Cromack till 1783, and appear as they stood in that year according to the map hereto annexed. The name is preserved in the Donegall Pass of this day. The following advertisement, much abridged, will further explain the former condition of some of these places. Cromack Mill is advertised for sale with other large properties of the Joy

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<sup>1</sup> These statements were made by Mr. Henry Joy in the *News-Letter* of 13th February, 1818. The construction of the straight course of the Blackstaff, from the point above mentioned till it formed at its entrance into the Lagan what was afterwards called Cromack Dock, has always been attributed to this Earl of Donegall; but the Long Bank is more difficult to understand, inasmuch as there is a Long Bank marked on the map of 1685.

THE W. RAILROAD

Frian

To Lijburn.



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## BELFAST LONDON

RIVER LAKE

*The County of Down*

*Scale of 100 Yards*

[illegible]

*The County of Antrim.*



family, and also the lease of one acre, two roods, and three perches of Cromack Wood.

"The Mill," it states, "is situated at the termination of the Mall adjoining the Town of Belfast, with two roads communicating with the town, the one by the Salt Water Bridge, the other by the New Shambles. . . . Included in said Lot will be sold the Lease of 7 acres and 2 roods chiefly covered by that extensive sheet of water on the north side of the Mall embanked for the purpose of increasing the quantity of wheel water: . . . several other plots of land on one of which are eight houses for workmen on Malone Road at the Salt Water Bridge: . . . Oaks and other trees growing on 6 acres, 3 roods, and 17 perches of Cromack wood."

It was not long before this that a ranger for Cromack Wood was advertised for.<sup>1</sup> Many will still remember the extensive sheet of water called Joy's Dam, announced as for sale in this advertisement, but none the woods of Cromack as seen on the map.<sup>2</sup>

The Long Bridge in those days was one of the wonders of the town, heard of far and near, and had been so from the time of its erection. No account of Belfast throughout the century omits the Long Bridge. Observations about the town by visitors are not difficult to obtain. They are often curious, and mention circumstances which may have generally escaped the observation of residents. The following words of a stranger convey to us what he thought of Belfast in 1772. The communication has some topographical items, and general remarks on the town and its people. The paper is called, "A Description of Belfast in a Letter from a Traveller to his Correspondents in London. 12th May, 1772."

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<sup>1</sup> One of the old inmates of the Poorhouse, recounting to another the events of his past life, which forms an episode in David Boyd's poetical history in the year 1806, informs his auditor that, in other days,

"Lord Donegall gave me house and certain livelihood,  
And dubb'd me Ranger throughout Crummuc Wood."

<sup>2</sup> The original of this excellent map of 1783 belongs to John Sharman Crawford, Esq., of Crawfordsburn, who kindly lent it to be copied for this work. It is in reality a volunteer map, but is made to serve here for topographical illustration.

“This place noted for shipping Linens from the immediate spot of manufacture is seated on the river Lagan. A ridge of high mountains lies to the northward, and several bleach greens being interspersed here and there, add much to the prospect and give an agreeable variety.

“In the *Commercial Calendar*, many place this town in a rivalry with Cork, but the people who reside here more moderately assume the third place of trade on this side the channel.

“The houses are well built with brick and slated, with the streets pretty wide ; the pavement is bad in some places, but not in general. Were conduits of water run through them, which I think might be effected at an easy expense, it would take off the dirt which unavoidably gathers, and this with shameful heaps in many streets, must be a very great nuisance to the inhabitants.

“The Custom House is built near a Long Ancient Bridge of twenty one arches. The tide flows scarcely deep enough for vessels of 250 Tons burden. The river falls into an arm of the sea which constitutes the harbour, and this is choked up with a large bed of sand which obliges even those to wait for springs to warp up and down the channel. The inhabitants allege that a cut through this bed might take place and recover so much land as in a little time would amply compensate for the necessary expense.

“The imports of this place are no small increase to the National Revenue. They seem to stand these some years past at a medium of £65,000 per annum, of which tobacco and spirits compose a large share. Of provisions they ship a quantity with a large number of the finer linens to the London and American markets.

“The inhabitants of this town are industrious and careful, but methinks not so sociable as in other places I have passed through. A spendthrift might read a valuable lesson for himself could he associate a very little time here. We wonder why a place of such business as this lays claim to should be so much out of character as to have no Exchange or Coffee House for people in trade to resort to and confer.<sup>1</sup> I am told it has been attempted lately to establish some of the latter, but whether from the abovementioned disposition or what other cause the attempt has as yet proved in vain.

“A New Town Hall is now building ; it is a gift of the Lord and

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<sup>1</sup> This observation seems to be incorrect when one thinks of Change Alley, which was in existence at this time. Our traveller perhaps had been accustomed to larger places and more spacious accommodation. There were also several inns in the town in 1772.

on a handsome design, but scarcely long enough for its height. I hear the underpart is to serve for an Exchange, and the upper part for an Assembly Room and some other purposes.<sup>1</sup> The markets here are tolerably supplied particularly with fish as in other places on the coast of this Kingdom. . . . They have endeavoured to make their river navigable for some miles up, and abundance of money has been laid out but hitherto with little effect as nothing but small boats can ply up. At present they turn their thoughts to a cut from hence to Lough Neagh similar to the Newry Canal, and by this means propose diffusing goods at an easy carriage over several counties. For this purpose they claim an assistance from Parliament and allege they have received none of its bounty yet on such an occasion. The country hereabouts has a supply of wood and water, but a much greater a small distance from hence, which has a very pleasing appearance in the season. The inhabitants are healthy, and in general the ladies on the *l'enbonpoint* with good complexions.”<sup>2</sup>

Did the writer of this letter err far when he recommended Belfast as a place in which thrift could be learned?

Another topographical letter of the year 1780 uses very strong expressions regarding the external appearance of the town at that period. It was addressed to Mr. Portis, and is in these words—

“SIR,

“In my way from this city to Scotland in my entrance into Belfast I was vastly surprized and hurt to see a long string of falling cabins and tattered houses, all tumbling down with a horrid aspect,<sup>3</sup> and the seeming prelude to a pitiful village which was my idea of Belfast, untill I got pretty far into the town when I found my error, for indeed with some trifling improvements it might be made to vie with any town in Ireland save Dublin and Cork.

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<sup>1</sup> This was the Exchange and Assembly Room then in course of being built.

<sup>2</sup> The allusion in this letter to the Lagan Navigation is, in point of time, not correct. It was the main enterprise of Belfast in the eighteenth century, fully equal in importance, considering the era and the means, to the great railway which now issues from the town in the same direction, and had been in operation long before 1772, having had its beginning in 1754.

<sup>3</sup> This, it will not be forgotten, describes Sandy Row and Durham Street as they appeared in 1780 to this traveller.



“It was about 10 o’clock on Sunday morning when I stopped at the Donegall Arms as I meant going no farther that day. I strutted about the town; but Oh! Cleanliness, Celestial Maid! what was my surprise at beholding piles of dunghills made up through the middle of the whole town from one end to the other. I enquired the reason of this *outré* appearance, this *ville d’engraisser*, and that on a day when it should be the cleanest, and was informed that it was always the case on Sundays, for that Friday being the Market day the town was constantly swept on Saturdays, the dunghills built up (if I may be allowed the expression) in the manner before represented as sweet flavoured nosegays to regale the inhabitants on every Sabbath, when, if dry, every creature is recreating in walking from one place to another. . . . I also observed particularly in the main street, which is a very handsome one, that the pavements before the doors were very indifferent, and not by any means calculated to throw off the dirt having no descent from the houses to the channel; and here the new pavement in Dublin occurred to me where a footway is raised at the sides of the streets and bound together with a narrow curbing of mountain freestone. I would recommend such a mode of paving to your consideration; it answers full as well as flagging and will be less expensive to the inhabitants than the nasty pavements you have at present. . . . All this information I had from James one of the waiters at the Inn with whom I had a good deal of conversation as he waited on me at dinner. I request then, Sir, you’ll have the old houses at the entrance of the town pulled down or rebuilt, for nothing looks worse than an ugly entrance into any place; it prepossesses you immediately against both the town and people; it is a bad index. Also suffer no dunghills to remain in your streets on Sundays, and mind your pavements, all which will essentially serve the town of Belfast.

“Your obedient servant and well wisher

“PROPRETE.”

There is a third letter, which is longer than either of the preceding, but its burden is much the same—the uncleanness and entirely uncared-for appearance of the town. This writer says—

“He had been in the habit for twenty years of making frequent visits to Belfast, and during that time had contracted the highest esteem for its inhabitants, but it was a fortunate circumstance that

the town was situated at the bottom of a bay, the ebb and flow of whose waters occasion a frequent change of air to which alone can be attributed the tolerable health of the inhabitants as there are few towns in any civilized country where less regard is paid to external cleanliness." <sup>1</sup>

From these letters, and the more ample and minute details which natives, or old residents, or documentary evidence have supplied, a tolerable idea of the general topographical condition of Belfast may be arrived at, as it appeared about the beginning of the reign of George the Third, and some succeeding years. The extraordinary change to this day has been the subject of fertile comment. Let it for a moment be considered; let, if possible, the view which met the eye in 1764 from the Long Bridge be realised. The County Down side was little more than open country; the County Antrim, at the nearest points of vision, was almost alike; only a beginning had yet been made. Even so lately as 1775 Mr. Macartney advertises lots of ground for building on Hanover Quay, Prince's Street, Forest Lane, and other places around, suitable, he says, "for merchants, tradesmen, or seafaring people." So almost rural was the prospect that in the limpid waters of the Lagan, or passing under the arches of the bridge, a spectator might have beheld graceful swans gliding, quite in character with the comparatively tranquil scenery.<sup>2</sup> Passing along either side of the "Old Key," which was not very far from the Long Bridge, boys might have been seen fishing in the clear water before the Church, and still farther away the Blackstaff might have been discovered equally clear, and placards displayed warning people against trampling the meadows on its banks on their way to bathe in the unpolluted

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<sup>1</sup> These letters are all in the *Belfast News-Letter*, but are here greatly abbreviated.

<sup>2</sup> "Some ill disposed person shot from the Long Bridge Two Swans the property of Lord Donegall or Arthur Trevor, Esq. As the number of swans on the river add greatly to the beauty of the prospect from the Long Bridge, none other but an idle, wicked, worthless person could be guilty of so base an action. Two Guineas Reward." Advertisement in *News-Letter*, 1764.

stream,<sup>1</sup> and at a part of it now dense with population, and sounding with the unceasing roar of huge manufactories.

In High Street was flowing the open river. It was arched over at intervals from 1770, but at the period now endeavoured to be recalled was merely confined in places by walls built by the householders living on its banks. At night the town was literally unlighted and unguarded; a stranger, or even an inhabitant, at such a time ran the risk of falling into the river; and if he attempted to cross the street by one of the bridges might endanger his bones by stumbling over the cars with which it was encumbered.<sup>2</sup> In daylight a casual visitor would have found the streets dirty and unswept, the orders about sweeping before the doors, and removing dunghills with promptitude, though incessant, being apparently ineffectual; and he would have beheld little in the best of them to arrest attention, much less to excite praise or admiration. Symptoms may have been obvious of comparative wealth, of considerable trade, and activity of habit, which had long been the features of the town. The backwardness was of the age, and is not brought forward as a reproach, but merely to record the aspect of outward things, so well as they can be proved or inferred from the standpoint now reached. About the year 1764, then—though the changes consequent on the rebuilding must by that time have appeared—such was still the town, such its streets, its river, its general accommodations, its topographical and physical appearance. It was literally a small town, partaking of all the defects and wants of small towns of the day, without beauty or adornment, or any of the advantages now universal.

It only remains to complete the topography nearly at the end of the century, having maps of that period to make the subject clear, assisted by such descriptions as they will

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<sup>1</sup> This is the actual fact; the Blackstaff was deemed pure enough for bathing purposes, and was used for such in the last century.

<sup>2</sup> "Carmen leave their cars in public places at night, particularly on the bridges, whereby people fall over them breaking their legs or arms. Penalty for so doing 10s." Advertisement in *News-Letter*, 1768.

necessarily draw forth. References to maps, and examination of them, form after all the best means of acquiring topographical information. The state and size of the town nearly at the very end of the eighteenth century may be fully obtained from the well-known map of 1792,<sup>1</sup> and which was republished in 1863. According to it the town contained, in 1792, as stated in the margin, 75 streets and 3107 houses. This must have included many small and obscure lanes and entries, as on examination the map does not represent above sixty streets deserving of the name. Taking what was then a frequented spot at the north end of the town—the Brown Square corner of Peter's Hill—the map marks only a single house, a respectable-looking country mansion, from that place to the Shankill graveyard. If others had been built they should certainly have been shown; we of this day can only infer their non-existence from the fact here stated; and the Lodge Road, just adjoining, was almost equally bare of all evidence of population, having no more than two houses, to all appearance far away in the country. Few are ignorant how both of these roads, now streets, and numerous others leading from one to the other, at present swarm with population.

Selecting next, what is sometimes now a crowded and noisy place, the Donegall Street end of John Street, the map represents two houses standing at the bare corner, and which, of somewhat antiquated fashion, still stand there, and on the gable end of the lower one of which the inscription "S. M. C. 1789" is marked in large characters with black bricks, indicating the name of the founder or occupier, and the date of their erection.<sup>2</sup> Thence to the Charitable Society's building on the hill it is all

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<sup>1</sup> This map was first published by Mr. Williamson in 1792, and was republished by Messrs. Marcus Ward & Co. in 1863 as a companion to their great map of Belfast, as the town was in the latter year—now itself, after an interval of only fourteen years, far from its real proportions; but a new map by that eminent firm has been for some time in preparation, bringing up the size of the town to the latest period, and which will be immediately published.

<sup>2</sup> It is stated that these letters are the initials of "Samuel M'Crum," who came from Scotland to overlook and further the spinning and manufacture of cotton in the Poorhouse.

barren, little more than agricultural land ; and there are persons still living who have seen trees, corn, and potatoes growing in that end of Donegall Street nearly from John Street to the Poor-house.

Looking again at the map to the Poorhouse itself, as it was in 1792, nothing appears on every side around the bare buildings—no houses, no streets upwards and beyond ; but beneath, and commencing almost at the gate which entered the grounds and extending along its front to the site of the barracks, which were not then built, was a long line of thatched huts marked on the map as Fisher's Row, and which so existed in all their deformity for some years of this century. In other directions from these upland grounds—from Antrim Road, Lodge Road, Carrickfergus Road—there appear for the most part only town parks, fields, open lands, and rural lanes, with about a dozen of what were called the villas of those days dotting here and there over an immense extent of surface. Among the rest York Street had then literally no existence. A lane opposite John Street and above Academy Row, short and narrow, and destitute of any facilities for thoroughfare, marked, less than ninety years ago, the embryo of that great street, now one of the main arteries of the town.

On the lower side of what was known in modern days, and by people still living, as the old Carrickfergus Road, and beyond a street partly built on, called at one end New Row, at the other Brewery Lane, a waste extended from the distant water-side up almost to the above-named road on the elevated ground. This wide-spreading untenanted waste is marked as the Point Fields, from a point of land projecting into the sea about half-way between the extremity of the town, as it then was, and the Mile Water Bridge. A ship-yard at the town end, two houses, and a glue works, comprise on this map all made by human hands upon this great tract, on which there is at this moment a considerable portion of the town.

Looking to another side of the town, it will be seen that in 1792 the town parks or fields closely adjoined the rear of the



tenements in Castle Street, Mill Street, and Barrack Street, and abutted on the back of the Linen Hall, which, even in this century, was secured but by a common ditch from the grazing herds in the Bedford Street and Linen Hall Street of this day. The entrance into the town by the present Linen Hall Street is quite modern, the old entrance from Lisburn, as has perhaps been more than once said in this work, being by way of Sandy Row and Durham Street. The improvement which shortened the way had been in contemplation at least since 1798, as there is a map of that year made by Thomas Patterson exhibiting the straight and shortened course, not exactly as it was made, but in the same direction. Very many years after, far on in the century, Great Victoria Street and the numerous streets on each side of it were all merely meadows or grazing fields. On the map of 1791 an acreage of great breadth extends from the Lagan to the Falls Road, unbroken by streets, and with no sign of life or manufacturing industry. The Lisburn or Dublin Road crossed about its centre; at a few points two or three short rows of poor cottages are found; the Blackstaff, spanned, as it still is, by the Salt Water Bridge, meandered through the wide waste; two brickyards, a large house undesignated, another house called Brick Hall, and a nursery near the bridge, alone represent what was the town of Belfast over this immense tract, if the map be faithful. On the other side of the Dublin Road was the "Pass Loning," threading its way through part of Cromack Wood, so marked even in 1791 in very large characters, and which bore in its proper season the leafy honours of the oaks and elms of the forest.

So early as the year 1758 James Hamilton, by advertisement in the newspaper, cautions persons not to bathe in the river near "Crummuck Bridge." This meant, it is to be supposed, the bridge over the Blackstaff at the end of the Mall, where there is now a larger and more substantial structure.

The Lagan appears to have reached almost close to Arthur Street when this map was made, and the bank to restrain its approaches is most conspicuously marked. This bank is made to



stretch to a considerable bend in the Lagan, about half-way to the place at which the Blackstaff now enters it. On its opposite side is the Mall. Close by is the Paper Mill, the point from which frequent views were taken of Belfast in the distance.<sup>1</sup>

Though this map shows the town considerably in advance of its condition in 1764, the last descriptive era, it was yet, in 1791, without any buildings of much size or pretensions to architectural elegance. The two selected for exhibition on the corners of the map are the Poorhouse and the Exchange, the former presenting a frontage not materially different from that which it yet retains; the latter with its five iron gates resembling nothing so much as the entrances of a gloomy prison. The one Episcopal church, for architectural appearance, might have been as well deserving of a corner as either of them.

The first Presbyterian Meeting-house in Rosemary Street, then lately built—the “New Erection,” as it is called in this map, though more than two generations had worshipped within its walls since it first received that name; the other meeting-house associated with the Presbytery of Antrim, the Seceding house in Berry Street, the Catholic chapel in Chapel Lane, the obscure little Methodist chapel in Stable Lane, formed all the houses of public worship in the town at the end of the century.

The Bank Buildings, the New Bank on the south side of Ann Street, the White Linen Hall, the Brown Linen Hall, the Play-

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<sup>1</sup> “I did two drawings of Belfast. I took one of them from the Public Mall. In it are five figures standing in conversation. Dr. Marriat a physician, a large well looking man in black, Mr. St. John Wallace in a blue hunting jacket, Miss Donaldson in a riding habit with a large hat and feathers, Mr. Robert Caldwell in a suit of dark brown and what was more rare in those days a round hat; and myself in a full suit of fawn colour, silver buttons as large as half a crown, and these upon my cuffs and pockets, my little Nivernois gold laced hat, hair full dressed, and rose bag, grey silk stockings with white embroidered clocks and large silver buckles. The other view I took from the offside of the Long Bridge. These two drawings were purchased by one of the first families in town.” This more concerns costume than topography. The painter was John O’Keefe, artist, dramatist, and actor, and the extract is taken from his *Recollections*. His garb was certainly more theatrical than became the Paper Mill locality, or that of the sweet-smelling waters of the Blackstaff in later days. Are the pictures he names still to be found?

house, the Custom House, the New Shambles, the Academy, the Barracks, and the Market House, make up the list of all which stood at the time as the public buildings of Belfast. Many of them are still to be seen, some in decay, and others diverted from their original purposes.

“The original bed of the Blackstaff river became May’s Dock, and afterwards Police Square, as it now remains.”

“The high-water line above the Long Bridge was near Great Edward Street, and all riverward of this was leased to Sir Edward May. The lands lying west of Cromac Street and Great Edward Street as far as Clarence Place, and now including Joy Street, Russell Street, Henrietta Street, Alfred Street, Hamilton Street, and many others, were leased to the Joy family by the name of the Cromac Mill Dam; and the lands lying east of Cromac Street towards the Lagan, and now comprising Lagan Street, Verner Street, and numerous other streets in that neighbourhood, were leased to the May family by the name of the Ice House Field.”

“Where Ship Street and Dock Street now stand was leased by the name of the Point Fields; and where Garmoyle Street and adjoining streets have been built was leased as ‘slob or sleetchy strand,’ lying between Point Fields and the River Lagan.”

“Lying between Skipper Street and Church Lane and the river were a number of old streets and lanes of which the names alone remain; the houses were demolished to make room for Victoria Street, Albert Square, and Queen Square.”<sup>1</sup>

This concludes the modern or eighteenth century topography of the town, so well as with some pains and research it could be collected. It is a subject which admits of no great connection; but, having introduced much that was before unknown, its unavoidable want of continuity in details, and the occasional introduction of a few topics not strictly within the domain of topographical research, will, it is hoped, cause such to be overlooked.

Not to leave any part of this subject untouched which may

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<sup>1</sup> From Mr. Charles H. Brett’s excellent paper read before the Literary Society of Belfast on the Topography of the Town.

elucidate the topography of the period, there is here finally introduced a map of Belfast of 1790, well worth handing down to posterity as a record of the condition of the town at that era. Its necessarily reduced dimensions in this place render it less valuable than is the broadsheet from which the copy has been taken. The original is four feet six inches in breadth, and two feet six inches in height. It is the property of the Water Commissioners, and hangs in their office in Rosemary Street. The copious marginal notes all refer to turn-cocks and extent and situation of pipes, from which it may be concluded that it was made specially for water purposes, and has come down to the present Commissioners as a kind of heirloom from their predecessors. It is much more rude and imperfect as a map than that of 1791 or 1792, which has been just taken as the foundation of the topographical description of the town at that time, though it preserves most of the same public buildings and the streets. It shows the great intended canal in front of the Linen Hall, and several other peculiar features in which the more finished production of two years later is wanting. There is no doubt this large map gives in the main a correct representation of the town as it then was. All the streets are not named (notably Donegall Street, which was called Linen Hall Street, as was also Donegall Place at first), and the gardens around the houses, though existing, are not delineated. But the two great maps—namely, that of 1685 and that of 1790—as here engraved, may be taken as standards to estimate the progress of the town in the one hundred and five years between the dates of their execution. How little, after all, was that progress as compared with the wonderful growth of the last half century, but how great in comparison with the first map of the age of Queen Elizabeth, when Belfast was little more than a solitary castle among the desolate wastes, or, as it would be more agreeable to think, among the woods which then stood, and the streams which then flowed, and in some shape still flow, from the mountains and through the valleys which make Belfast so pleasant and picturesque in aspect and situation.

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## CHAPTER XX.

## THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN BELFAST.

**A**FTER the wars of the Revolution, Belfast felt the weakness which generally succeeds prolonged periods of disturbance. Trade was bad, the country was destitute both of money and manufactures; and, though actual war had happily become obsolete, scarcely ever before had religious and political differences assumed more marked characteristics. This town, from its peculiar circumstances, suffered at the outset of the eighteenth century from a cause sufficient to retard real progress, or, at all events, to keep alive contention and animosity. The Test and Corporation Act was passed in 1704, upon which eight—some accounts increase the number to ten—members of the Corporation, not the least known or least useful within it, because of preferring a particular form of Church government, were disqualified from interfering in those civil matters which concerned the advancement and good government of the general community. One of these was the Sovereign, David Butle, who, being a Presbyterian, resigned his office, informing his fellow-members of the Corporation of the fact in these words, on July 29th, 1704—

“By a late Act of Parliament disabling Dissenters to serve in Public Office I find it convenient for me to dimitt the Exercise of Sovraigne in yo<sup>r</sup> Corpora<sup>n</sup>: and therefore as a Clause in your Charter enables you I desyre you'l please to meet on Monday and one of your number to act as Sovraigne till Michaelmas that Mr. Macartney commences pursuant to the Record at Midsummer. He is a Gentleman if you think fit may enter upon the Trust now.

“DAVID BUTLE Sovraigne.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*

David Buttle, or Butle, as he himself spells his name, was a Belfast merchant.

From inhabitants of Belfast, and Presbyterians of influence in its vicinity, this Act excited expostulation, and in a petition they affirm—

“That the clause imposing the Sacramental Test placed an odious

The year preceding his deposition from the office of Sovereign he wrote to the Hon. Robert Southwell, Secretary of State at Dublin, the following letter :—

“Hon. Sir,

“From advaise wee have of noe lesse than three or four privateers being in ye channel to the northward our Macht<sup>s</sup> is under great concern being wee expect every day seven or eight Ships that may fall in their way of considerable value from Virginia and Leeward Islands, besides many Liverpool, Bristol and Whitehaven ships that generally in Time of War come this way: therefore begging that his Grace will please either order Captain Camaek who arrived this day, or some other frigatt forthwith to sail to prevent ye great Reuin that must otherwise attend hir Majesty’s subjects.

“DAVID BUTLE, Sovereigne of Belfast.

“BELFAST, 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 1703.”

So little was apparently known by the Government about Belfast and its belongings in 1703, that Mr. Butle is called Sheriff of Belfast, and his name is transformed into Bull. The above letter is in the Civil and Miscellaneous Correspondence, which overflows with communications from all parts of Ireland. The Belfast letters are not so interesting as those from other places, being in general about ships, and not giving any insight into the internal affairs or condition of the town. There is a lengthened one to Joshua Dawson complaining of a hardship which was being suffered by Robert Andrews, William Mitchell, and Daniel Mussenden in having “the Coblan Isles appointed for airing Goods”—in other words, performing quarantine—as there was no harbour there for either “shipp or lighter to ride att and an Impossability of landing Goodes,” therefore they represent the “Cunny Waste neere Hollywoode as the most fitting place for airing Goodes,” and pray that as their ship, laden with “Iron and other Hardware,” was leaky, and as it is *unexpressible* the loss likely to be sustained by having the iron and Lattin wire contained therein “all *damuified*,” they seek speedy redress.

Another letter is from John Chalmers, of Belfast, asking protection for a ship, holding out as a motive for such being extended to him that said ship was laden with tobacco, and what a prodigious sum would arise therefrom to her Majesty in the way of duty.

Still a third letter, to Joshua Dawson, from Edward Brice, returning thanks for getting his ship, the Marlborough, out of quarantine, and sending him three “Butts of Old Hock” (?) as a small return for his great civility. Another time Mr. Dawson is favoured from the same quarter with a “Barrel of Eels” (?). It may really be “Ale,” for the writing in both cases is so much defaced that there is scarcely a possibility of making out what they express. However, they were presents to the secretary or official for favours rendered. The orthography in these letters is remarkable.

There is an excellent account of the Rev. Edward Brice, of Broadisland (the first

mark of Infamy upon at least the one Half of the Protestants of this Kingdom whose early, active, and successful zeal for the late happy Revolution gave 'em hopes that they wou'd not have been rendered incapable of serving your Majesty and the country."<sup>1</sup>

It was perfectly true. Presbyterian influence had much effect on the success of King William. This irritating condition of the town continued, with more or less intensity, all through the reign of Queen Anne, for even at its termination an address to her Majesty, couched in terms the most adulatory of the Sacramental Test—which, it avers, “has stopt the spreading Contagion of *Schizm*,” and produced in their judgment other inestimable benefits—was circulated with unabated activity. It was signed by the High Sheriff, by magistrates, by Grand Jurors, by gentlemen and freeholders of the county in abundance, and, what comes more home to the subject as pertaining to the history of the town, by no less than forty-one of the principal inhabitants of Belfast, five of whom were Grand Jurors. There is every reason to think that the members of the Corporation of the Presbyterian religion imitated the conduct of David Butle, and did not, by occasional conformity, or in any other respect, swerve from their faith. The Presbyterian ranks have been thinned in later days by more gentle and persuasive means. The five Grand Jurors who declared themselves as favourers of this intolerant address

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Presbyterian minister in Ireland), and his descendants, in M'Comb's *Presbyterian Almanack* for 1859, pp. 66, 69. It is stated that Edward Brice, who wrote the preceding letter, was a grandson of the Presbyterian minister of Ballycarry, was a Belfast merchant, and “was a member of the First Presbyterian Congregation under the care of the Rev. Samuel Haliday, and sat for some time under the ministry of the Rev. James Kirkpatrick, author of *Presbyterian Loyalty*.” This is all no doubt correct; Mr. Brice is frequently noticed in his mercantile capacity, as is evidenced in his correspondence with Joshua Dawson; he was never Sovereign, but was a recusant Burgess.

There was rather an inefficient protection to the mercantile or shipping interest at this period. This extract from another letter reads very like Black Mail—

“Westenra Waring of Belfast informs the Government that the merchants here doe informe me yt two small privateers are plying on this coast & yt they lately took a Scotch vessell ye Master of which went to one of 'em yesterday with his Ransom from this place.

“BELFAST, May 27, 1706.”

<sup>1</sup> *Presbyterian Loyalty*, p. 564.

were J. Waring, Robert Greene, Wilfred M'Manus, C. Cobham, and Francis Dobbs; and the general list of its supporters was led on by William Tisdall, the Vicar. They were all, of course, members of the Established Church. Some of the names of the very old Corporators are found among the number, notably Ashe and Willoughby. There are also Henry Ellis, John Winder, Robert Le Byrtt, Joseph Greene, James Byrtt, and others.<sup>1</sup>

The owner of Belfast in those years was absent from it. He was a soldier of considerable eminence, and the regiment of the Earl of Donegall receives repeated mention in the public documents of the time.<sup>2</sup> This regiment was recruited, it has been said, from families living on the Donegall estates, chiefly from Malone and the adjoining districts. General Macartney of Belfast was associated with the Earl of Donegall in the Spanish wars.<sup>3</sup> The Earl unfortunately lost his life at the siege of Monjuich on the 10th of April, 1706, on which event the

<sup>1</sup> This Address, with all the names of its Belfast supporters, is printed in the *News-Letter* for 30th November, 1792, prefaced with these explanatory remarks — "The original of the following Address to Queen Anne was found in the Papers of a Person deceased. We give it *verbatim et literatim* as it stands in the MS. The reader will observe from it the rapid growth of liberality within the last seventy-eight years, and reflect with pleasure on the harmony which at present subsists between Presbyterians and members of the Established Church. Her Majesty was pleased to die on the 1st of August to the great joy of the Whigs of that day, and the Address was not forwarded."

<sup>2</sup> See particularly the references in the volume of Treasury Papers, 1702-1707.

<sup>3</sup> "From the Camp at Meldert July 11. On Friday last Brigadier Macartney who was taken prisoner in the Battle of Almanza arrived in this camp from Spain and gave the Duke of Marlborough a full account of that battle.—*Dublin Public Intelligence*, July, 1707." General Macartney here named was brother of Isaac, one of the promoters of improvement in Belfast in the eighteenth century. It will not be forgotten that they were a different branch of the Macartney family from that George who first came to the town from Scotland, and who was ancestor of the Earl, as has been related in his biography. The general was also second to Lord Mohun in the famous duel between that nobleman and the Duke of Hamilton, when both combatants were killed. Macartney was accused of having stabbed the Duke when lying on the ground mortally wounded, and so great was the outcry against him that he fled to the continent and did not return till the death of Queen Anne, when he was tried for the alleged offence, but acquitted. He was a staunch Whig, as Isaac in Belfast also was. He died Commander of the Forces in Ireland.

King of Spain transmitted to Queen Anne the following letter—a just eulogium on his character and military talents:—

“MADAM MY SISTER,

“It is always with the utmost satisfaction that I do justice to those worthy persons who signalised themselves by their conduct and valour in their Majesty’s service and mine.

“My Lord Donegall was remarkably so when alive, and more particularly at the last siege of my city of Barcelona, both in his quickness in succouring it from Girond and the long valiant defence he made in Mountjoy where he lost his life at the assault. It is in a great measure to his memory that I am indebted for the preservation of that capital, and, it may be, for all the possessions I have now in Spain.

“I shall injure your Majesty’s usual generosity by offering to recommend to your favour the family of so worthy a gentlemen, for I know your Majesty’s inclinations go to it. I will only add that I shall place all the marks of favour and acknowledgement which your Majesty will please to bestow on the family to my own account as well as the remaining obligations. I am with the sincere respect, gratitude and love, &c.

“To the Queen of Great Britain.”<sup>1</sup>

The widow of the Earl of Donegall possessed from ample evidence most noble and estimable qualities. She was Catherine Forbes, daughter of the Earl of Granard, and was soon required to interfere in defence of what she believed were the rights of her youthful son. She presented a petition to the House of Commons against George Macartney, the Sovereign, for several unwarrantable and illegal practices by him, committed in the exercise of his office. Many inhabitants joined in this petition. It was the time of the controversy as to the appropriation of the taxes raised for dock purposes and the house-money, all super-added to the grievance of the Test Act. The Town Clerk was ordered to lay before the House the Charter of Belfast, the Cess Book, the Bye-Laws, the presentments, and other public documents relating to the transactions of the Corporation; after

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<sup>1</sup> *Corporate Records.*



examination of which, and the hearing of witnesses and counsel on both sides, George Macartney was fully and unanimously acquitted of all the charges preferred against him. In the same year another petition was presented to the House of Commons, which discloses the unsatisfactory manner of parliamentary elections in the old corporate days. This petition complained of an undue return of Samuel Ogle, Esq., as one of the representatives for Belfast, and from the long report in the *Commons' Journals* the point on which the objection rested can be extracted. Twelve burgesses elected the members for the town; but of these "only six on this occasion could be collected for that purpose, the others having withdrawn themselves from acting as Burgesses on account of their not having received the Sacrament—that is, after the Episcopal form." Of the six who considered themselves able to act three voted for Mr. Ogle and three against him, on which George Macartney, the Sovereign, insisted that he had two votes, one as Burgess and the other as Sovereign, and that such being the case, he and his two *confreres*, being by this mode of calculation four in all, confirmed the election to Mr. Ogle, whom they had chosen. The three on the other side who opposed the sitting member were Patrick Duff, Constable of the Castle, Robert Leathes, and Lewis Thompson. To their triple vote the Macartney party answered that though Patrick Duff had been appointed Constable in 1702 by the late Earl of Donegall, which was renewed to him in an informal manner by the Countess, yet it did not appear that he had taken the oath either of Constable or Burgess, and—far more fatal stumbling-block—that he had not "obtained any certificate of his having received the Sacrament, according to the Act of Parliament to prevent the farther growth of Popery, and therefore that he should have no vote whatever." The Committee of Privileges decided in favour of Mr. Ogle. Patrick Duff was a recusant, from which it would appear that the nonconformist Burgesses carried the numbers and weight of the Corporation, but were kept in restraint by the Test Act. Both these petitions to the Irish House of Commons, and in which Belfast was concerned, were

in the year 1707, consequently some time before the abortive address to Queen Anne was concocted, though they are all equal evidences of the state of parties in the town for several years.

Scarcely had Lady Donegall recovered from the calamity of her husband's death and the possible annoyance consequent on these petitions, when another misfortune yet more disastrous befell her. The Castle of Belfast was burnt in April, 1708, and of her six daughters three who were children perished in the flames. Their ages have not been ascertained, but as their mother was the second wife of Lord Donegall, and he himself killed in his fortieth year, their great youthfulness may be inferred. No contemporary document has been discovered giving a connected narrative of this event. Molyneux, who visited the town shortly after its occurrence, merely alludes to it in connection with the destruction of Lisburn by fire, the effects of which he had just witnessed. Sir Richard Cox, in one of his letters to Sir Robert Southwell, mentions among the news of the day, under date of April 27th, 1708, "Lady Donegal's House at Belfast is burn'd, and two or three of her daughters in it." We are informed by tradition that it was occasioned by the carelessness of a servant in placing a large wood fire in a room recently washed, and leaving it therein untended; that some sailors first discovered it; that a servant called Catherine Douglas lost her life; that others escaped with difficulty; and, more interesting, that a "daughter of Parson Berkeley was also burnt to death in the Castle,"<sup>1</sup> which last statement is made in connection with a belief that the father of the great George Berkeley, Bishop of Cloyne, was Collector of Belfast in 1684. It was not his father, but his grandfather, who held that office.<sup>2</sup> The fact is mentioned in the introduction to the *Life of Berkeley* and elsewhere; but who was the parson, as it is related that the bishop's father resided near Thomastown, in the county of Kil-

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<sup>1</sup> *Joy's MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> Ryan's *Worthies of Ireland*, vol. i. p. 79, and Gorton's *Biographical Dictionary*.

kenny, where he himself was born? It is not impossible the Collector may have left a representative of his name in Belfast, and that there may be a substratum of truth in the story; but nothing beyond such vague statements or traditions preserve to our day the memory of an event in which not only precious lives, but valuable manuscripts and pictures may have perished.<sup>1</sup>

“In the year 1714, after the death of Queen Anne, George the First was proclaimed in Belfast with excessive rejoicings by 400 inhabitants on horseback. All were pleased but four or five.”<sup>2</sup> This is rather an exaggeration. The Presbyterians were not so entirely in the ascendant in point of numbers. They were numerous, and did not much deplore the death of the Queen. The religious laws in force, and the dissatisfaction consequent

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<sup>1</sup> The days on which the two events occurred—the death of her husband and the destruction of her children—were observed by Lady Donegall during the remainder of her life as days of prayer, fasting, and seclusion. Swift commemorated her virtues in the following lines, before misfortunes blighted her life :—

“Unerring Heaven, with bounteous hand,  
Has formed a model for our land,  
Whom Love endowed with every grace,  
The glory of the Granard race ;—  
Now destined by the Powers divine  
The blessing of another line.  
Then would you paint a matchless dame  
Whom you'd consign to endless fame,  
Invoke not Cytherea's aid—  
Nor borrow from the blue-eyed maid,  
Nor need you on the Graces call—  
Take qualities from Donegal.”

The only letter of condolence on this unfortunate event which has been found was written to Lady Donegall by no less eminent a person than Mr. John Hughes, the friend of Addison and Pope, the author of “The Siege of Damascus” and many other dramatic and poetical works, though how he came to write the letter is not explained. It is utterly destitute of the slightest allusion to the misfortune itself, its causes or results, but contains very excellent language exhorting to resignation, and the great esteem in which Lady Donegall was held is perfectly apparent from its contents. A few introductory words state that two children only were lost. There were three. The letter is in one of the forgotten serials published in Belfast in the last century, entitled, *The Literary Museum and Weekly Magazine*—is so long after the occurrence as January, 1793, and was then published as a rarity.

<sup>2</sup> *Joy's MSS.*

on them, produced considerable emigrations from the north of Ireland from the very beginning of the century. Though not apparently having actual relation to Belfast, this town, from its importance and maritime character, was too familiar with the discontent prevailing, and the measures adopted to avert its consequences, or escape from them. Many letters and pamphlets which, there is not much question, were printed in Belfast, are to be found relative to the state of society at this period. They may not be strictly correct in all their details, but are sufficiently so to show the feelings which prevailed among a large section of the community.<sup>1</sup> A writer declares that "emigration is not encouraged by the ministers, who look upon it with dismay," and gives at the same time this sad account of clerical emoluments—"Their stipends are so precarious, depending entirely on the voluntary contributions of the people; and many of them have not now Ten Pounds a year each to live upon out of their congregations."<sup>2</sup> The Government also appears to have felt uneasy on the subject. Sir Marmaduke Coghil, writing in a tone of alarm to Secretary Southwell in 1729, says that "2000 have left the north of Ireland this spring, and more are preparing to follow."

There is much general truth in these allegations. At the same time the Presbyterian population of Belfast, strictly considered,

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<sup>1</sup> Short portions of one may be introduced in this note.

"Soon after the danger was over and the peace and tranquillity of the nation restored, to their great surprise and disappointment an Act passed which effectually discharged and disabled them from any other service to their king and country, and which made them incapable of bearing any office, civil or military, under the severest penalties; so that neither they nor their sons after them are ever to expect to be anything above a petty constable, and that that and such like servile employments are put upon them." The letter concludes in this satirical strain—"Great numbers are preparing to go off next spring, . . . so that if a stop is not some way put to this course in all probability we shall have few Protestant Dissenters left in this part of the kingdom that will be worth keeping or who will be able to transport themselves. And thus will be completely effected 'The Shortest Way with the Dissenters,' without giving any further trouble to those zealous Gentlemen who to prevent the danger of the Church have been at so much pains to procure laws for that purpose."

<sup>2</sup> From the *Pinkerton MSS.*

did not greatly diminish by emigration in consequence of unjust laws, however the inner working of the Corporation may have been affected. Its progress was retarded by absenteeism, by the burning of the Castle, and the weakness of character of the Earl of Donegall who now possessed the estates. But in the absence or barrenness of Corporate Records at this period, another source of information has been discovered which will show us something of the town life—the genuine history of the day. It is quite original and authentic in character, and discloses the social or private condition of the town, free from bias, or religious or political colouring; and, so far as it goes, may be fairly entitled a history of the inhabitants. It is not a journal or diary of the time—a kind of document which has never been found here, and the most precious known to seekers after precise knowledge—but is a most copious *Burial Registry*, containing much more than the bare statements generally to be found in documents of that description. Not only are the deaths of a vast number of Belfast persons and those of other places inserted in it, but also, in many instances, their occupations, places of residence, their standing in the town, and frequently notes suggestive of the state of particular branches of the population, when that population was mainly composed of Presbyterians. The heading of the book informs us—

“That the original Presbyterian congregation of Belfast possessed Palls and Mourning Cloaks intended at first no doubt for the accommodation of their own members, but afterwards hired out so as to produce an income of £50 per annum and upwards. The *Register* was lately recovered in part, and is a curious document. It includes 24 years, from 1712 to 1736, and contains a list of nearly 2000 funerals, including those of members of considerable families in different parts of the country, with the names and dates, the Palls, and the number of Cloaks let out to each, and the prices charged.”<sup>1</sup>

The palls alluded to are called in the book, “Mar Cloths,”

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<sup>1</sup> This book belonged to the First and Second Presbyterian Congregations jointly, and contains the records of the funeral proceedings of both for the era which it covers. It seems, however, to have been always more identified with



meaning *mort cloths*; they were of different qualities, and made of different materials, the prices for their use and all other attendant expenses being governed according to the desire or the means of the friends of the deceased to have Pall and "Clokes of Cloath" in an humble way, or, more ostentatiously, those made of velvet. The Presbyterian paraphernalia of woe of Belfast were in repute, and sent, as required, and at considerable cost, to places in Tyrone, Derry, Armagh, and other far-off localities. The Church had also funeral garments for hire, which is proved by a notification in this book, in which, after their own cloaks are reckoned up, it is stated, "ye rest are the churches," as if the presence of death or the wish for a grand burial softened for the moment religious estrangement.

Some examples out of the great array of funerals contained in the *Register* are inserted, with the intention of exhibiting notices of places either still known or lost and forgotten, the occupants of the period, hints of obsolete customs, or the last records of persons whose names have already appeared in these pages, or were otherwise prominent in the town. The number of obituaries is so great that a difficulty has been found in judiciously selecting even the few which follow as specimens of the entire:—

"August 6th 1712. Mrs. Ann Buttle, her ffuneral p<sup>r</sup> Mr. George.  
Best Mar Cloth,                   ...                   7s. 6d.  
14 Clockes at 1s. 6d. per Clocke,...£1 1s 0d."

This is the obituary at large in the usual form, but which it will not be necessary in all cases to repeat. The deceased was the wife of David Buttle, or Butle, the Sovereign of 1703 and 1704, who suffered persecution for conscience sake, and resigned

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the First Congregation, as being the more important, and probably that in which it originated. The book was well known, of course, to Dr. Bruce, and was highly valued by him. He wrote a general account of it and a description of its contents in the *Christian Moderator*, London, 1827, vol. i., p. 311, and from which the passage in the text enclosed in inverted commas has been copied.

There were also palls and cloaks for funerals belonging to the Third Congregation, as the providing of such is alluded to in the Building Book, but no record exists of their use; and they were every way inferior to those of the First, which were on a truly great scale.



his office, as already related. His own death occurred two years later, the obsequies being recorded thus—

“December 25th 1714. Mr. David Buttle his ffuneral p<sup>r</sup> son George and Mr. William Cunningham.” He also was honoured with the best “Mar Cloath, and Thirteen followers arrayed in Clokes,” as his wife had been.

“July 13th 1712. Mr. Ogilbe Minist<sup>r</sup> in Learn p<sup>r</sup> John M<sup>c</sup>Mun Marchn<sup>t</sup>.

“Best Mar Cloath 15s. 18 Clockes at 3s p<sup>r</sup> Clock £2 14s 0d.”

The Presbyterian clergy in the country, in numerous instances, are buried with the Belfast mourning emblems. The price for their use at a distance was double that which was charged to the town residents, of which this funeral is an example—

“Nov<sup>r</sup> 8th 1712. Mr. John Kenidy, Cultra, his Childe’s ffunerrall.”

The name and place here expressed will be recognised. Before this date Dr. Hugh Kennedy had been a physician in Belfast, and attended the Earl of Donegall; was present at his funeral in 1675, and received a legacy from him. His will, dated 1683, describing his residence then to be at Ballicultra, in the parish of Hollywood, is in the Record Office, Dublin.<sup>1</sup>

The funeral of Dr. John Peacock, who was another leading practitioner in Belfast in the beginning of the eighteenth century, is also recorded as having taken place in 1712. Dr. Peacock had unwisely delayed the execution of his will till death overtook him. He had therefore only time to tell Mr. Samuel Smith that he thought he had £500, which he directed to be equally divided among his three children, and that his eldest son, Upton, should be bred a physician. The name is now unknown in the town.

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<sup>1</sup> This must be correct, the *Funeral Registry* being the best of evidence, and “Mr. John Kenidy” was probably son of the physician. But in the *Landed Gentry* it is stated—“This branch of the noble house of Ailsa left Ayrshire in 1668 and settled in the Co. of Down at Cultra, where they have since remained.” Belfast is not named, nor any allusion to Dr. Hugh Kennedy, who lived in it in the practice of his profession, and who, so far as can be judged from putting the statements together, first got Cultra.

In 1713 we find "John Torbourn Tabacco, his wife's funeral. Mr. John Smith potter his wife's funeral. Doctr Correy, his funeral p<sup>r</sup> Doctr fforguson. Richard Whiteside hatter North Street, his childe's funeral." These were all accompanied, in the usual manner, with particulars of the expense of each in the matter of "Clockes." Three of them afford proof of trades then in the town—the early manipulation of tobacco, a hatter in North Street, which must also have existed in 1683, and, more significant than either, a potter called Smith, which was the name of one connected with the old China Works of Belfast, established some years before.

They are followed in the same year (1713) by entries of the "mort cloths" and cloaks being required for the funerals of "Hawkins M<sup>c</sup>Gill Esq. of Gill Hall; Mrs. Maxwell at the Drum; the Scots Lord; Madame Upton; Lord Mussrain at Antrim;" and many others at a distance. This does not refer to the Scotch Lord, who, if a judgment can be formed from the prices charged for the sable emblems, was a town resident, but under what circumstances, or what his name and fortune, are alike unrecorded. Though the entries are very curious documents, they, unfortunately, leave much unspoken, or rather unwritten.

"1715, April 6. Mr. Thomas Poringe<sup>r</sup> (*sic*) his funeral p<sup>r</sup> Mr. Peter Troall."

The deceased was Thomas Pottinger, the Sovereign of 1688, and whose actions have already occupied some attention. The burial was an honourable and expensive one, and so far in favour of his possessing at his death a good rank, and also most probably the respect of at least a considerable portion of his townsmen.

Mr. Elsmore was still Collector of Belfast in 1715, his child's funeral being noted in that year. Then comes that of "Sqr Dabb" (? Dobbs) and "Mr. Patrick Fforguson y<sup>e</sup> Coronour" (? Coroner).

"1716. James Nichols, Barly Bumper, to the best Mar Cloath."

What was the profession or employment of the defunct? The velvet pall would indicate something respectable, but there were no cloaks, consequently no professing mourners at the funeral, which was under the charge of David Ferguson, the sexton.

“1716, July 15. Doctor Alex<sup>dr</sup> his funeral pr Mr. James Blow.”

The price charged for the pall, and the cloaks, no less than nineteen in number, proves this to have been also a medical practitioner of some reputation in the town.

“1717, Feby 14. Lord Mount Alex<sup>dr</sup> at Cumbo<sup>r</sup> his funnerall.”

“1718, Sept<sup>r</sup> 3. Mr. Daniel Musindins March<sup>t</sup> his childe's funeral.”

This was Daniel Mussenden in the days of his youth, and probably the same who is the subject of the subjoined note.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The Mussendens were in Belfast in the eighteenth century, but must have begun their career in the town in the seventeenth, of which this entry in the *Registry* is a presumptive proof. It is the earliest simple notice that has been found of the name. Daniel Mussenden was for fifty years one of the principal merchants in the town, the first banker—at least his name is the first of the three individuals who formed the earliest bank in 1752—and the owner of Larchfield near Lisburn. He retired from trade in 1758, as shown by an advertisement in that year. His will, dated in 1763, is a most ponderous document, and deals with an immense amount of property, some of the Belfast portions of which—in High Street, where the shop or original place of business was—are still owned by the family. One sentence from the will is here inserted. He leaves “to the Congregation of Belfast commonly called the Old Meeting House to be distributed by the Minister and Session among the poor of said Congregation £50, or else laid out in a purchase; the like sum to the New Meeting House; to the Minister for the time being of the Congregation in Belfast commonly called the New Erection the like; and to the church minister £50 to be disposed of in the same manner.” He thus bequeaths considerable and equal donations to the several houses of worship in the town, an instance of great liberality.

No information regarding the Mussendens has been obtained from the present representative of the family. What has been stated is correct, so far as it relates to the connection of Daniel Mussenden with Belfast, though it may be a contrast between the early history of the family in this town and that given in the *Landed Gentry*, and in which no mention whatever is made of Belfast. In that work the first of the family is said to have come over with William the Conqueror, the name at that remote era having been De Mussenden. After going through some changes, the Reverend Francis Mussenden, in 1670, passed over to Ireland and was collated to the prebend of Dunsfort, in the County of Down. He settled at

"1719. Abel Hadskis, Nealor, his childe's ffunerall."

This was most probably the ancestor of Mr. Hadskis, who had a shop in this century at the foot of North Street, and also of another of the same name, who was, so far as has been ascertained, the first ironfounder of Belfast.

Among entries like the preceding, others of persons at some distance are mingled. Two of these, as written, are—

"June 13, 1717. Mr. Patterick a Dair minist<sup>r</sup> at Carrickfergus, 18 Clockes. Forgiven."

This last is a term which frequently occurs in the entries, meaning that for some special cause the charge for the mourning garments is not exacted.

"1718, February 8th. Alex<sup>r</sup> Dolway Esq. p<sup>r</sup> Mr. Ja<sup>s</sup> Adair March<sup>t</sup> 13 Clockes at 2s. p<sup>r</sup> Clocke."

A few entries, showing the grotesque orthography of the Meeting-house sexton, who had charge of the *Registry*, are here copied precisely as they are written in the book—

"1719. Pat fforgoson at the Sin of the Son (Sign of the Sun).  
 „ John McCroath Carman in Har Clus. lean (Hercules Lane).  
 „ Mr. ffransos Heslip in Milstreat Ealsoler (Aleseller).  
 „ John Sutor Eeal Selor in the Adam and Eave (Ale Seller  
 in the Adam and Eve).

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Hillsborough, and had two sons, John and Francis, the former of whom became Vicar-General of Down and Connor, and was married to Jane, daughter of Adam Leathes. Francis was Registrar of the Diocese of Down, and from him Daniel Mussenden descended—most probably his son—from the funeral of his child in 1718, and the Daniel of Belfast of *fronied* reputation. This account is here much abbreviated, but there was an intimate connection between the families of Leathes and Mussenden, as appears from Sir Bernard Burke's minute work. It was subsequently, however, to the early and important time of the Leathes family in Belfast, if the first appearance of the Mussendens in Ireland only took place in the year 1670. Daniel and William Mussenden in union advertise, in 1757, lands near Lisburn to be set, at the same time shops and stores in Belfast to be disposed of, as if making preparation to abandon commerce and the town together. All of the family, however, did not leave the town at this time, as on the 7th February, 1765, the *News-Letter* gives this piece of intelligence—"Yesterday arrived the Hawk from Greenock with 200 puncheons of Barbadoes rum for Messrs. Mussenden, Bateson & Co."

“1719. Samuel Millor Elselor at the Egol and Chill (Aleseller at the Eagle and Child).”

These expressed the names of the signboards, which were then almost universal in Belfast, as in other towns.

“1719. Mr. Hendrie Ealloss Sufron (Mr. Henry Ellis Sovereign), his wife’s ffunerall p<sup>r</sup> Obadiah Groves.”

Mr. Ellis himself died a few years after. No notice of such event or of his funeral is in the *Register*, but his will, dated March, 1721, or rather the inventory attached to it, gives us a somewhat novel picture of the condition of the elevated class of Belfast in 1721. This Mr. Ellis was brother of Mr. Alderman Ellis of Carrickfergus, and in right of character and office certainly a member of the select society of the town.

The will of Mr. Ellis, in which he designates himself “Sovereigne of Belfast,” which office he had several times filled, is very short; but the inventory of his property, notices connected with its disposal, customs during his illness and at his death, and which, it may be imagined, were commonly prevalent at the time, make up a document of great length, many sheets being filled with the details. The plate specified amounted in value to £22 16s. 9d., consisting of rings, buttons, swords, buckles for “shows” and other purposes, but only five tea-spoons; there was one “Skreen” with the Ten Commandments, one grey vest and “britches,” two old “tye Wiggs,” and one old “Bobb Wigg,” a Lignum Vitæ Punch Bowl; five “Chainy” tea-cups, and nineteen Pewter Dishes. All the property of the deceased, however inconsiderable, is mentioned with the same precision, even down to “one pot with a hole in it.” The funeral charges, and the expenses incurred during the illness of Mr. Ellis, which seems to have been long, are expressed with minuteness; the sack and white wine for himself were small in value compared with that of the “ale and brandy to y<sup>e</sup> people y<sup>t</sup> waked all night during his sickness.” The funeral expenses are very large, among which are “5s. 5d. for ringing the Market House Bell,” which was probably, from this amount, a ceremony many

times repeated. This inventory is a document which would have been well worth copying in full, but as it is in a place of strict security (the Public Record Office), and is always accessible, sufficient attention has been here drawn to it.

In October, 1719, the obituary of a member of another rather noted family in Belfast, and his will also, or, more properly, the inventory of his goods and chattels, throws some little additional light on the state and practices of the period. This was "David Chalmers MarChant pr Daniel Mussindins,—the beast Mar Cloth and seventeen Clokes"—a formidable company of tearless mourners passing to the churchyard. Mr. Chalmers was a first-class shopkeeper, and probably brother of John Chalmers, who was Sovereign in 1702. The inventory and notes of matters resulting from his death are almost as copious as those of Mr. Ellis. The "cash received for the shop goods sould at the Cant" was but £23. The sexton of the church is paid 13s. for ringing the church bell, and the Sovereign 10s. for "liberty of the Market House Bell;" from which sums it may be inferred that the two public bells of the town kept up an unceasing clangour while Mr. Chalmers lay unburied. A porter received sixpence "for sweeping the street at the Burial." The whole town appears to have been in commotion outwardly about this funeral. The executors had to unravel long columns of accounts, from which many original entries might be obtained, such as—

"Pd for administering and spent with the Register £1 7s. 11½d.; Cash pd Mitchell for a Quarter's Schooling of little David Chalmers 2s.; and for one Load of Turf and a Question Book 4d."

There is scarcely a well-known name in the town which does not come forward in some way in connection with the deceased. His picture and coat of arms are lodged with Mr. Brown George Macartney; and this is the only will examined in which allusion is made to the funeral-palls and cloaks of the town.

What were the characters mentioned in this entry?—

"Nov<sup>r</sup> 15, 1720. The ffunerall of Andrew M'Kee truper, p<sup>r</sup> his Wife the Stamper."



Here is another, affording proof of the existence of Trades' Unions or Societies, after some fashion, in 1722—

"May 30th, 1722. W<sup>th</sup> Campbel D<sup>r</sup> to the funeral of hir son,  
the best Mar Cloth and sixteen Cloaks, ... .. £1 1 0  
To the Capt<sup>n</sup> of the tealours (tailors) three clockes, ... 0 3 0  
To the Capt<sup>n</sup> of the Beackours (Bakers) three clockes, 0 3 0  
To the Capt<sup>n</sup> of the Showmackers (shoemakers) three  
clockes, ... .. 0 3 0"

There is a note expressing that the "Beackours p<sup>d</sup> sam;" the tailors and shoemakers seem to have been delinquent.

"1722. The ffunerall of brown Gorge M'Cartney p<sup>r</sup> his son George."

The division of this family into two branches causes some difficulty of discrimination, particularly as George was a common name with both. George Macartney, the son of the first of the name, was still living, and continued to live for many years after 1722. The deceased was, therefore, of the Blacket branch. He is mentioned in *Presbyterian Loyalty* under the familiar *sobriquet* of Brown prefixed to his name, and was interred, with the best pall and nineteen mourners arrayed in the cloaks, in the churchyard of Belfast, on 13th July, 1722.<sup>1</sup>

"1723. Funeral of a child of barbra M'Gill, hole of the wall."

"1724. Funeral of A Brother of Archolb Milor ffdlor living in Noar Streat."

"Funeral of Long Margrie p<sup>r</sup> Mr. James Blow."

Near these three base entries is that of "the leat Sir John Roding (Rawdon) in Mayorah" (Moira), with a procession of twenty-four cloakmen from Belfast.

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<sup>1</sup> It can be inferred from his will that this George Macartney was the Sovereign who was frequently in office. Before the will was ever seen he is called in the old Est of Sovereigns Major George Macartney, and that he died in office in 1724, whereas the *Burial Registry* as above makes his death to have occurred in 1722. It is impossible to see through this. The will does not clear it up. He is merely referred to when the subject of administration is on hand, on 17th December, 1724, as "George Macartney late Sovereign and Barrack Master," the latter office favouring the idea of his having been a military man in some shape.

"1725. John Nockleson in the Long Loan, Baggman, one Clocke."

Does this mean Beggarman? If so, an attendant in funeral garb was remarkable for a person in that class of life; but perhaps he was a privileged bedesman of the town.

"1725. Mr. Ed<sup>d</sup> burt Sufron in town 6 clockes."

This is the unceremonious and humble way in which the death and funeral of Mr. Byrtt, the Sovereign, are registered. His name was Nathaniel, however, and he did die in office this year; and it proves how careless and indifferent the official was when he calls him Edward, and how ignorant when he spells both his name and the word Sovereign so strangely. His successor was James Macartney, and by the *Funeral Register* he also died in office in 1726. In the old roll of Sovereigns such demise is not expressed, but the *Register* must be taken as a good authority. Mr. James Macartney is likewise called in the sexton's spelling "the Sufron in town," and has a funeral of very modest pretensions.

"1727. John Eacles, Mar Chant in Broad Street," died this year, showing that street to have been his place of residence and business. He was probably son of Hugh, the noted merchant, shipowner, and token-issuer of the seventeenth century.

"1729, January 24. The funeral of Mr. John Macartnay March<sup>t</sup> p<sup>r</sup> the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Samull Holloday."

He left by will "his cane, ring, and watch, which formerly were his father's, to his brother George now in Dublin." There is a letter enclosed in this will from Francis Clements, one of the "overseers," to a person to value the property of the deceased, beginning, "The sudden death of honest Jack Macartney is y<sup>e</sup> occasion of giving you this trouble." This funeral being under the care of Mr. Haliday, minister of the first Presbyterian Congregation, would appear to prove that the branch of the Macartney family to which "honest Jack" belonged were Non-conformists. Some of the name had incurred the penalty of exclusion from office for religious opinion.

"1736. The funnerall of Mr. John Clugston p<sup>r</sup> his sister Mrs. Elenor Clugston."

This was the Sovereign of former years. He was chosen to that office four times, and was no doubt a very loyal man, and a strong opponent of the Pretender and all his abettors, public and private. He is generally described to have been the active magistrate who, not being able to seize the Rev. John McBride in the flesh, assailed his picture, as already stated in the biographical sketch of that eminent minister. There is no direct proof of the accuracy of this statement; but Mr. Clugston was doubtless ready at all seasons to defend the Hanoverian succession. His will is in the Record Office. It is dated 1736, but is of no interest whatever. He certainly leaves his sister Grizzel 5s., which leads to much litigation, the end of which is not related. In 1727, one of the years in which he was Sovereign, and within a few weeks of each other, the *Funeral Registry* records the burials in a very unostentatious manner of the mother and sister of "John Clugston Souvran in Town."

The foregoing examples are enough to show the character and contents of this most valuable book. Out of such a profusion of entries, from "baggmen, fiddlers, and snuffmen," up to those relating to persons of the highest distinction both in town and country, the few that have been selected constitute but the smallest trifle; and the book is unwillingly relinquished, so strongly does it bear on the domestic history of the town for twenty-four years. In many cases its contents might serve as presumptive evidence of deaths or family incidents, not alone of the inhabitants of the town, but of others at a distance from it. Inferences might also be drawn from so great a death-roll of the condition of certain parts of Belfast on points very desirable to be known. The population, for instance, of localities or streets, or the relative proportions of occupations most generally prevalent, might be approximately recovered by a close analysis of the volume. Endeavouring to do this, it is found that out of 500 deaths, in which the residences of the deceased are noted, the highest number in the twenty-four years issued from North

Street, being 84; the next from "Petter's Hill," 52; Mill Street, 43; Waring Street *and* Broad Street, 40; the Plantation, 34; Church Lane, 32; the "Keey," 22; the Stone Bridge, 21; the Sluice Bridge, 4, which three last-mentioned places meant High Street, neither that nor Bridge Street being so named in the *Register*; "Roosemary lean" had 29 funerals; "Scoper" (Skipper) Lane, 14; Long Lane, 13; "Harc拉斯 Lean," 10; and many other places are described, such as the Four Corners, the Back Rampart, Cow Lane, at the Browrie (Brewery) at the "Shooger Hous" (Sugar), the Pound, the Corn Mill, and the Market House; several entries also occur of places the names of which are now altogether extinct. The mass of the population lived in a very narrow compass during those years, and, as a natural inference, North Street was the most crowded or most populous of them all. The inhabitants then resided in the town, and not in suburbs or the country, except in rare cases. These streets are now generally abandoned by the better class, and are occupied either for business only, or widened, swept away, or renovated by the advancing tide of improvement.

A remarkable feature in the death-list of those non-newspaper times, and one quite opposed to present usage, is, that not the slightest mention is made in any instance of the ages of the deceased. The occupations, on the other hand, are very frequently noticed, giving, in a sort of way, some insight into the comparative extent of the common trades or employments. The deaths of 72 merchants are recorded; no shopkeeper is named, the title, perhaps, not being in unison with the pretensions of so aristocratic a place as Belfast during this quarter of a century. They were all shopkeepers notwithstanding; at least, those not strictly so were a small minority. The next greatest number of deaths were those of mariners, being 36—ample proof of the intimate connection of Belfast with the sea. Carpenters and ship-carpenters numbered 23; coopers, 18; tailors, 17; carmen, 16; barbers and wigmakers, 15; shoemakers, 12; weavers, 12; butchers, 12; glovers, 10. There were three printers—well-known names—and one "stashoner," Mr. Wilson

at the Stone Bridge; but, as a general fact, it may be concluded that nearly all the trades of the time are mentioned. Thus of the "sope boilers," coppersmiths, gunsmiths, wheelwrights, braziers, potters, "measons," painters, nailers, cardmakers, whip-makers, "yearn" merchants, pipemakers, lastmakers, and saddlers, death visited the dwellings of only one of each during twenty-four years. This, it will be perceived, renders these remarks merely casual, and not capable of forming, as they could not possibly do, a foundation for any return of the gross population or the number of persons employed in any trade, because in numerous cases the occupation, as well as the place of residence, of the deceased is omitted. The funeral garments were also in requisition for the more wealthy and respectable classes only;<sup>1</sup> the forgotten multitude died and left no sign. The deaths of nine doctors, seven apothecaries, and three schoolmasters are mentioned, all being classes select, and comparatively few in any community; while only four labourers are included in the long death-list.

The names of the inhabitants of Belfast, as this book informs us, were almost all English or Scotch; very few appear having the Celtic ring. The town residents were chiefly interred in the churchyard in High Street. In some instances mention is made of Hollywood, Antrim, or some other not very distant locality, but

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<sup>1</sup> It is not easy to explain the following extract when reading over this ample and precise *Registry*. It is from a "List of the Absentees of Ireland with Observations on the present state and condition of that kingdom," Dublin, 1729, p. 77. The era concurs with that of the *Registry*, but the latter must undoubtedly be taken as the higher authority for Belfast habits and usages:—

"The inhabitants of Belfast have begun a laudable practice of using linen scarfs and crapes at funerals instead of silk modes which are generally imported clandestinely from France, and of little service for any other purpose and are pretty much of the same price; whereas linnen scarfs may be applied to many other uses, and may be made of all prices, from one shilling to eight shillings a yard, answerable to the quality or fortune of the deceased, which are good arguments for their use, and the more so when we consider that they are the manufacture of our own kingdom."

Were the "mar cloaths and clokes" beginning to be looked on with less favour and linen coming into use at funerals about this time; or is the statement altogether inaccurate as applied to Belfast?



only one funeral found its way to Shankill. Many of the poorer classes must have been carried to that sacred ground; all were not laid in the old graveyard of the town, but the certainty is that the great majority and the most important persons were. In the Parish Registry in St. Anne's Church from 1745 onwards the burials in Shankill are numerous.

Besides its interest as a *Funeral Register*, the book contains many notes arising from the nature of its contents, and requiring at least a passing remark. Such items as the following occur:—  
 "Novr 3, 1717. Received of cash from Mr. Sam<sup>l</sup> Smith from the Executors of my L<sup>d</sup> Mountalexander on account of a Cloake that a piece was torn out of at his ffuneral 5s." "Paid Mr. Richard Ashmore for Two New Larg Cloke Bagis 8s. 1½d."  
 "Paid Alex<sup>r</sup> Bigger for caring (carrying) the Clokes and Mar. Cloath to Newtown to Mr. Marss ffuneral 2s. Mr. Gamble was to be buried the same night that they cald for them."<sup>1</sup> "Paid Charles Ramage for bringing 3 Silver Cupes from Dublin 2s. 6d." These are examples of the miscellaneous entries. Burials at night were practised in Belfast in 1717; and though a goldsmith was an inhabitant of the town, his skill did not recommend him as a fabricator of silver cups.

These lugubrious details, if followed out to their extremity, would afford a surprising fund of authentic information of some of the old families of the town. The population, compactly gathered together, could not have exceeded 5000 persons, if there were even so many, at least in the first years of the *Registry*. The merchants, many of them living in the entries with their hall or principal doors but a few feet distant from each other, knew the faces and figures of all their neighbours and fellow-traders. Some were still living who had seen King William in Belfast. The strife of parties, political and

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<sup>1</sup> This funeral notice occurs in 1738—"On Wednesday night last interred in the Church yard in a private genteel manner the corpse of the late Mr. Samuel Haliday."

This practice of night-burying among some Belfast families reached into the present century.



religious, was relieved, it may be hoped, by frequent and familiar intercourse. A "Cafe House" kept by David Layons had been introduced into the town; and in 1714 Lady Anne Chichester, one of the surviving sisters of the three who had perished when the Castle was burnt, is bequeathed in her grandmother's will "her sylver tea pot," a rare article at the time; but the mention of such facts proves that these two great promoters of civilisation had come to be known, though but little as yet, among the general population. They encouraged intercourse, however, among a certain class. Occasionally in documents at the beginning of the century "Derry men" are mentioned—that is, those who had taken part in the great defence and the Boyne—many of whom resided here, and fought over again, in the "Cafe House" or social circle, the sieges and battles of the Williamite wars.

The inhabitants were greatly at a loss for some public place of assembling. The Market House, not a cheerful building, had long been standing, and served for the meetings of the Corporation, or the few public occasions which broke in upon the general quietness of the town. The dwelling-houses were small and inconvenient. The Belfast people did not seek in that age, nor could obtain, the splendid mansions of the present. So far were such beyond their reach or conception, that it has been frequently mentioned, by persons commenting on the littleness of bygone days, that the houses were chiefly thatched, and that all those in Bridge Street were so even in 1710. This, as a general statement, is most probably exaggerated. At any rate, there is no documentary proof of it. In the lease given to Mr. Radcliff in 1698 of premises in Mill Street—certainly not the most advanced locality in the town at the time—are these words—"to build the premises with good English like houses with oaken roofes, covered with Slate or Tyle uniform with the house James Echlin, Clark, now dwells in." Radcliff is also bound to pave the street opposite his own premises. The *Burial Registry*, which has formed the groundwork of so much comment, mentions also two "Sleators" as resident while its pages were being

filled. There is even a slater named among the trades much sooner. In North Street in 1738 a "New Slate House" is advertised to be set, the language certainly leading to the opinion that such a roof was rather exceptional at the time and place. The "old thatched Cabbins" will be remembered in connection with the miserable condition of the dwellings of Belfast of 1754. All this is perhaps rather topographical than historical, but, so far as it discloses the comforts or general condition and standing of the people at a certain period, is not unsuitable to this place.

In monetary matters everything was on the same scale. In 1732 the total cess raised on the town and demesne of Belfast was £48 12s. 0d., paid by 980 persons, some of whose payments were so low as a penny;<sup>1</sup> one person had to give 11s. 6d., and a commercial establishment, probably the greatest in the town, twenty shillings. In 1743 the town's share of cess had risen to £57 7s. 11d., assessed on 999 inhabitants, paying from twopence to £1 2s. 9d., the highest being George Macartney.<sup>2</sup> These are very small sums at the time, when the exactions of the Commonwealth eighty or ninety years before are remembered. The town taxes, or contributions required from the inhabitants for their own special wants, would more enlighten us as to their real temporal condition. Nothing of the kind like modern reports of public bodies, in continuous manner, examined and audited, had been known or put in practice, or at least made public. Some general taxes the Corporation raised for current expenses, ordinary and extraordinary, small in amount and irregular in levy. But there was no borough rate, no poor rate, no water rate, no rate for lighting and watching, no hospitals to support, no sanitary reforms in progress; but little, in truth, seriously to affect the moderate resources of our distant predecessors.

Yet these predecessors had their enjoyments in their own way.

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<sup>1</sup> *Joy's MSS.*

<sup>2</sup> These statements of the money required to be raised by Belfast for cess in the two several years named are also extracted from the *Joy MSS.* The probability is in favour of their correctness, but no means of authentication have occurred.

One example of such has escaped the wreck of the other documents of which it formed a portion, and brings into life again a section of the inhabitants as they appeared on a great festive occasion, and under certain circumstances illustrates the customs and manners of the time. The striking points only in the statement alluded to are brought forward; much is omitted.

“The rejoicings on account of the birth of a son and heir to the Hon. John Chichester and presumptive heir to the R<sup>t</sup> Hon. Arthur Earl of Donegall were held on Tuesday 17 July 1739.

“At Six o'clock in the Evening the gentlemen assembled in the Town Hall, and the ladies at Mr. Banks's house. The gentlemen numbered 120, the ladies 100, all inhabitants of Belfast, except four or five from Carrickfergus.

“There were Two Tables the whole length of the large hall covered with green Cloth, which, together with the large Table under the Sovereign's Seat were filled with Gentlemen as close as they could conveniently sit, and the following Healths were drunk in Bumpers. . . . About 8 o'clock several Gentlemen went from the Town Hall to Mr. Banks's to attend at the Ball, where they found the Ladies all dressed in very rich Cloathes, and some of them shining with Jewels and Gold Watches, who made a splendid Appearance. They continued dancing until about Ten o'clock. . . . There were two Great Bonfires about Forty feet high, one of them before the Town Hall, and the other before the Castle Yard . . . the whole Town was illuminated with variety of pretty Figures made by Candles in the Windows. . . . After the Bonfire at the Town Hall was kindled each Gentleman went to it from thence with his Bottle and Glass in his Hand and after drinking a few loyal Healths threw the Bottle and Glass to the Populace, and then returned to said Hall, and were served with new Ones. . . . Barrels of Ale and a hog's-head of punch were given to the Populace: and the Bells continued ringing all the Time.”

The rejoicings were, it is hoped, not too much protracted, but all were treading on flowers, and may have disregarded the warning of the clock tower, which then, as now, but in another end of High Street, could remind the revellers of the flight of time.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “On Saturday morning last the Dial Plate of the Market House fell on the

The enterprises of 1715 and 1745 for the restoration of the Stuarts were met in Belfast with the opposition that was to be expected. Volunteers and trained bands were immediately on the alert to repel invasion on both occasions, but on neither were any active measures required to defend the town or country. Numerous original papers there are among the correspondence in the Record Office concerning the rebellions, chiefly that of 1745, but they are of a general description relating to preparations for prospective or possible tumults, and do not refer to our town or locality. The usages and fashion of the time come more home to us.

Being at a loss for more intellectual pursuits, the gentry of the day employed themselves largely in cock-fighting, which was the universal and favourite sport, and patronised by persons of the highest rank. "In the Great Cock Match fought between the Counties of Antrim and Derry, £10 10s. 0d. a battle and 100 Guineas the Main, John M'Naughton won by two battles over the Earl of Antrim." "Ballymacash Races continue a whole week. There will be Cockfighting in Lisburn every evening." Such advertisements abound in the newspaper. The usual *programme* is "cock-fighting in the morning and a ball in the evening for the ladies;" cocks' spurs are advertised for sale among scythes and reaping-hooks by the ironmongers of Belfast; and to so great a height did it reach that it came at last to be styled the Royal Sport of Cock-fighting. For health, goat's

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watchman beneath and broke his thigh."—*News-Letter*, August 14th, 1739. There was a clock reverberating through High Street in 1739 as in 1877.

This narrative of rejoicings is nearly the last entry in the few copies of the *News-Letter* which precede the long hiatus of nearly ten years, and which no search has yet been able to discover. They may be found somewhere by a future enquirer. The want of them at this time, however, is very seriously felt. The custom in early newspapers was, it is true, to abstain from that fullness of domestic and local intelligence now so amply supplied, and which is so greatly longed for. It is not to be doubted, however, that the years of the *News-Letter* which are wanting contain many facts of interest belonging to the history of this very time in the eighteenth century. Newspapers of 130 or 140 years ago, however deficient according to modern ideas, are not all sterile. The ten years which are undiscovered seem, from an incidental remark, to have been as much unknown to the late Mr. Henry Joy as to the writer.

whew and pure air are advertised at the Throne,<sup>1</sup> the same locality at which in this generation have been established the Convalescent Home and a Children's Hospital. A clock-maker from Whitehaven lets it be known that he has clocks at the New Quay, and that he will be in town for six days. Were clocks for general sale, and clockmakers rare in the town? That can scarcely be, and yet there is neither a clock or watch maker noticed in the *Funeral Register*, while more uncommon trades are mentioned. At any rate, this advertisement of the Whitehaven man is very like that of a travelling clock-merchant moving about with his wares in new or thinly-peopled countries. A house bell-hanger and spring-curtain maker from London says he "will be in the town for a few days," as if this were a trade which had as yet no fixed representative. An engraver announces that he has been three weeks in town prepared for any branch of his art. These were occupations limited in number anywhere; not so the barbers and hair-dressers, who formed a large fraternity, the funerals of fifteen being recorded in twenty-four years. Their number could not but be large when all the men and some of the boys in the country wore wigs. Even the brown wig of a criminal was described as a mark for his identification in the advertisement for his capture. The Belfast wigmakers were admonished of their Sabbath-breaking in January, 1755, by Stewart Banks, the Sovereign, in a proclamation commencing thus—

"Whereas sundry Tradesmen in the Town of Belfast, and particularly Wig Makers and Barbers, do the work of their ordinary callings upon the Lord's day . . . . Therefore I do hereby charge and command that no Wig Maker or Barber do presume to shave, dress wigs, or carry them home in the town on the Lord's day, as they shall answer the contrary at their peril."

The first post chaise, it is said, appeared in Belfast in 1752.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Throne" is mentioned explicitly in 1766, which is the earliest notice of it yet found, though the name is peculiar and its origin unknown.

<sup>2</sup> *Joy's MSS.*



A coach-wheel maker, however, is noticed at an earlier period. No trade of this kind is mentioned in the *Burial Registry*, so that the ambition of the wheelmaker may have only reached to the repair of the few coaches of the gentry, and not to the construction of the entire vehicle. Sedan chairs were general modes of conveyance. This continued till the present century, the writer having seen, perhaps thirteen or fourteen years from its commencement, an old lady in full dress being conveyed to an evening party in that once somewhat select locality, North Street, in a vehicle of this description. All the more common trades essential for the support and progress of life were represented in the *Burial Registry*, though it is curious to find in 1749 such an advertisement as this—"Stewart and Young have stopped Baking for a few days waiting the arrival of a Baker now on the road from Dublin," and exactly a week after, as a piece of news considered important for the inhabitants, that "Stewart and Young began to bake again yesterday." It cannot be that bakers were rare, as the "Beackours" had their union twenty years before, and were tolerably numerous in the town in 1749.

These small affairs, and all other gratifications and employments, were affected by the events occurring around during the few years following 1750, when the rebuilding and changes were in progress. This time also concurred with a season of distress and scarcity, and which led to the great riots of 1756. Details of those riots are in the newspaper of the day, but having procured information regarding them from a source not generally known,<sup>1</sup> the version from that less accessible quarter is preferred, and is here in part reproduced as being entirely original. They consist of letters to the Government respecting the disturbances and the state of the town in the year named. They do not relate events so violent or fatal as those which have occurred in the riots of Belfast of recent years; but, on the other hand, they did not originate in party strife, but on a subject on which there was

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<sup>1</sup> *Civil and Miscellaneous Correspondence*, Record Office, Dublin.



general unanimity, and of far more urgent and potent character than flags, fifes, and drums. In fact, the ruling power, the stomach, was in question in 1756. Much of the correspondence is abbreviated or omitted, but the letters following will sufficiently tell the story.

“BELFAST, 22nd July, 1756.

“DEAR SIR,

“I am desired by the Corporation and principal Inhabitants of the town to send you this Memorial by Express to be delivered to the Lords Justices, and that an answer may be sent by him as soon as possible if no earlier opportunity offers, that is, if the Bearer should be tired with the Journey so as not to be able to return as soon as the Post. All Order and Government here are now at an end. . . . I was informed this morning that when I was yesterday in the Meal Cellar which I was forced to quit as mentioned in the Memorial several of them swore they would drown me. . . . I was likewise informed that they (the mob) declare that they would not want money, for as long as they knew of a man that had a penny they would have a half-penny of it. I believe their want will soon happen, for they have been doing nothing but roving about all this week, and from their behaviour I believe they will not hesitate to put their threats in execution, but then there will be no meal to buy . . . the country stopp<sup>d</sup> from bringing in any, and none will import for the same reason. The Cargo of an accidental Scotch ship here, about 60 Tons, is bought by eight gentlemen and to be sold at 13 shillings the hundred by which there will be loss, and yet notwithstanding it is thought the mobb will possess themselves of it and selling as they are doing Henderson’s at 9s. 4d. . . . Henderson’s will be done this day, and then none but the Scotch left. You see things are in a bad situation.

“GEORGE MACARTNEY.”

This was a bad situation indeed. Mr. Macartney ends another letter two days later in these words:—

“You have enclos’d Joy’s very extraordinary article for which he must make a public acknowledgment or answer the contrary to his loss, as it was really imposing on the Publick.”

The circumstances of the town were becoming more alarming, as the next letter proves.

"BELFAST, 31st July, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,

" . . . . I have consulted the Corporation on the Government's answer, and they all agree that there is no Dependence or Security without the Army, and the Town must in all probability be starved for none will bring in Meal either by Land or Sea till they can be secured of their Property which is impossible while the Mobb commands as is the present case, for no Justice dare Issue a Warrant against one of them, and if he did it would be to no purpose, as his house would be pulled down, and Himself be demolished with it. In the hurry when I wrote to you I forgot to send Joy's news article or advertisement which you will see was a very infamous one upon the Occasion, and had the Worst Tendency. I called the Corporation together upon it last Wednesday and they thought as I did. We sent for him and he pretended he had no bad intention. I reprimanded him severely for it, and told him if in his next paper he did not contradict it flatly as utterly false and scandalous, as it really was, he might blame himself for the consequences. He next day gave in something to that purpose but quite impertinent, and a short article was given him to insert in yesterday's paper, conceived in the modestest terms, but behold! it did not appear, which is a manifest contempt. Pray what is to be done with him? Will an indictment take place or what else, for though nobody be mentioned it is well known who are reflected on?

"GEORGE MACARTNEY."

"BELFAST, 11th August, 1756.

"DEAR SIR,

"Since my last a fresh Mob got up and made a considerable disturbance so as to alarm the Town. . . . They carried off Sacks of Meal, insulted the woman, drag<sup>d</sup> her out of her House, put her on a Carr in order to duck her in the Mill Dam. . . . They have committed other outrages of which you shall be particularly informed, but I cant doubt to-morrow's post will bring an account of the Government's compliance with the request of the Corporation and Town in general, for without it we shall be in a miserable situation. Inclosed you have a Ballad penn'd in favour of the Mob, supposed to be printed and published by the remarkable Mr. Joy. I have not call<sup>d</sup> the Corporation on this occasion in expectation of the above. . . .

"GEORGE MACARTNEY."

The memorial referred to in these letters does not accompany

them, nor the ballad—a much more serious loss. George Macartney, who wrote the correspondence, who spoke of Mr. Joy in such opprobrious terms, and wished to interfere with his management of the *News-Letter*, may have been actuated in some respects by personal feelings. At any rate, the correspondence shows that the mob had some supporters to countenance their unjustifiable actions; that they had the entire command for a time; and that magisterial interference was at an end. Macartney was not Sovereign in 1756, as in the general list frequently published Stewart Banks has been represented as holding the office in that year. Perhaps he relinquished it for the time to Mr. Macartney as having more influence, never perhaps having himself seen or been called on before to control so great a mob. It is at the same time unexplained why his substitute, if such he were, used such expressions as that he called the Corporation together, and to all appearance acted as if he were the actual Sovereign. His animosity to the proprietor of the *News-Letter* was not concealed, but a careful examination of the paper for the months of July and August, 1756, has failed to discover Mr. Joy's apology for his conduct.

During this time, and incited by the distress prevailing, incipient measures for the establishment of a Poorhouse had begun. The people of Belfast were never wanting in works of charity, as in 1757 a Poor Law system was established and systematically conducted. The town was divided into ten districts; twenty persons of influence were chosen to preside over them, and to take an account of the families therein of all stations—reporting, 1st, those who were able to contribute; 2nd, those who were just able to support themselves; and 3rd, those who were objects of charity.<sup>1</sup> The means of the con-

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<sup>1</sup> The “objects,” as they were called, were tolerably numerous for the small population of Belfast in 1757. The following is an account of the state of matters at the beginning of that year :—

#### BELFAST.

“At a Meeting of the Directors of the Poor Scheme in the Town of Belfast, on Wednesday last, ten of the Overseers went out of Office, and ten Gentlemen were elected to succeed them : And at the same time their Accounts for the Months

tributors had to be taken into consideration, and they were divided into eight classes, each person being required to make a monthly payment of from sixpence halfpenny to a guinea, according to the division in which he was placed, the latter a very large sum indeed, no matter what the means of the donor. No information is given of the number of persons in each class, which, if it could be procured, would enable those of the present day to judge of the comparative wealth of all the inhabitants. This outdoor relief, assisted by a guard of twenty men, was effectual, and no military were required to be sent to restore the peace. The system so described, under different modifications, continued till the Poorhouse was opened, and it is singular to see, when no compulsory law existed, the decision and assumed power which the Guardians, if they may be so called, exercised over the poor of the town and the many casuals who now began to resort to it, as well as the submission with which their decrees were received. They did not always require so large a sum for poor rates as immediately following

of January and February last were settled; and the State of their Fund is as follows:—

January.	Received for Contributions this Month out of				
	the several Districts	.	.	.	£82 2 5
	From Strangers	.	.	.	2 12 9
February.	Received this month out of the several Districts				91 3 5½
	From Strangers	.	.	.	8 6 10
	Took up part of the £100 given by Lord Donegall				50 0 0
					£234 5 5½
	Disbursed,				
Jan. 13	To 433 Objects	.	.	.	£47 11 2
27	To 496 ditto	.	.	.	52 10 10
Feb. 9	To 565 ditto	.	.	.	59 10 0½
24	To 584 ditto	.	.	.	61 6 4
					220 18 4½
	Remains in the Treasurer's Hands				£13 7 1

“The Overseers will go about next Monday to collect the Contributions for the Month of March; and it is expected that such Persons as then are obliged to be from home, will leave Directions with some Person at their houses to pay them.

“There is to be a Meeting at the Market-house on Wednesday next at 11 o'Clock, to settle the List of the Poor, for the District on Thursday.”

the great riots, but introduced a system suited to the time, and continued it as long as needed. This was also the year (1757) in which the first formal modern census of the town was taken. It appears to have now acquired a population of 8549 persons, and, therefore, in every sense of the description as now applicable to towns was a small place, but gaining every year in wealth and influence.

The town had hardly regained its ordinary quietude when the news of a French invasion at their very doors caused more alarm to the inhabitants than internal disturbance. It was in February, 1760, that Carrickfergus was taken by the French under the famous Thurot. Much has been written respecting this noted historical event. The following original account of it is confirmatory of the general narrative, and, being fresh from the pen of an eminent person living at the time, affords as faithful a delineation as any which has been produced.<sup>1</sup> It is well known this northern attack was intended by France as a diversion to distract the attention of the English Government from the more serious invasions in other directions. That part of the paper only is copied which has relation, more or less direct, to Belfast.

“ . . . Of the Armament designed for the North Three Ships only under the command of Thurot, whose experienced bravery & thorough knowledge of our shores, which he had long frequented both as a Privateer & as a smuggler rendered him a dangerous Enemy, entered the Bay of Belfast on the 21st of February, 1760. . . . In a Council of War the judgment of Thurot insisted that the Forces should land, & without regarding the ruinous Fort of Carrickfergus, proceed directly to Belfast, but luckily for us, the opinion of Mons. Flobert, General of the Embarcation, prevailed, who with much military learning, descanted upon the Impropriety, and danger of leaving behind them a *Strong Place*—Luckily I say, for had the six hundred men, to which number the Force was now reduced, immediately assaulted Belfast, they would have found that commercial

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<sup>1</sup> The writer was the Earl of Charlemont. The extract is from “An Account of the Political Life of the Earl of Charlemont by himself, addressed to his three Sons. MS. in possession of the present Earl; written A.D. 1789;” and extracts from which have been kindly furnished by John P. Prendergast, Esq.



City wholly defenseless, & rich in money, & in great quantities of linen Cloth—much spoil would have been obtained—The Troops might have reembarked, & the wind being then favourable they might have pursued their intended course without danger of being intercepted, and the Expugnation of the *Grande Ville de Belfast* wou'd have made no inconsiderable Figure in the *Bruxelles Gazette*. The stand made by the wretched Castle of Carrickfergus, whose whole defense consisted in a half ruined wall, & a few undisciplined recruits, cou'd not be long, yet was it manfully protracted till the ammunition was all consumed—and time was given to alarm the Country. Neither was the Country alarmed in vain. The National Spirit was instantly roused. From every neighbouring county great Bodies of Manufacturers & of Peasants hastily marched with such arms as they cou'd collect, & in the space of four and twenty Hours Belfast was secured from Insult." . . .

"As I was Lieutenant of the County of Armagh I thought it my duty to repair to the invaded Country, & waiting on his Grace the Duke of Bedford to learn his commands, was surprised & scandalized by his positive Declaration that he wou'd meet me there. Arrived at Belfast I saw with pleasure the situation of the Town which was crowded with Defenders. The appearance of the Peasantry, who had thronged to its Defence, many of whom were of my own Tenantry, was singular and formidable. They were drawn up in regular bodies, each with its chosen officers, and formed in martial array; some few with old Firelocks, but the greater number armed with what is called in Scotland the Loughaber Ax, a Scythe fixed longitudinally to the end of a long Pole, a desperate weapon, and which they seemed determined to make a desperate use of. Thousands were assembled in a small circuit, but these Thousands were so thoroughly impressed with the necessity of regularity that the town was perfectly undisturbed by Tumult, by Riot, or even by Drunkenness." . . . "On the Day of my arrival at Belfast the French Troops had been reembarked, & when I came to Carrickfergus the ships only were to be seen waiting for a favourable wind. Yet was not my Presence wholly useless. Flobert & about twenty of his men were left behind wounded, & my care to provide for them with proper lodgings & assistance was not unnecessary or ineffectual. The event of this trifling Invasion was happy & glorious. By the Spirit of the People the French had been prevented from making any mischievous Progress. Their Commander was wounded & a Prisoner, & the Squadron having been prevented by contrary winds from pursuing its safer course to the northward, was met in the Channel by the brave Captain Elliot with three Frigates, who, after an



Engagement of about an hour & a half, and the Death of Thurot, had the glory & satisfaction of bringing into the English Ports the whole Force."

Belfast did not escape from all loss on this memorable occasion. Accounts from equally trustworthy sources<sup>1</sup> relate private details probably not known to Lord Charlemont. The day succeeding that on which Carrickfergus was taken by the French a peremptory demand was made by the enemy on the inhabitants of this town to send them large quantities of wine, brandy, beer, bread, and cattle. If not immediately complied with they declared both Carrickfergus and Belfast would be at once burned. Two lighters were accordingly loaded with provisions, but the weather being stormy only one of them sailed, and even it was stopped by a tender in the bay. The French on observing this repeated their menaces against Belfast, upon which eight or ten carts were despatched with food. Only two of these reached their destination, but at the same time the detained lighter was permitted to pass on to Carrickfergus. The other carts were seized by the townsmen, encouraged by the crowds of volunteers and militia hurrying into the town to fight the French. A strong barricade was erected at the Milewater.<sup>2</sup> The safety of the town was soon assured, more than 5000 volunteers having assembled for its defence. The actual loss which Belfast sustained, made up by charges incurred for the volunteers, the payment for provisions, and other contingent expenses, amounted to £1365, which the Government repaid. Belfast had a fortunate escape on this occasion, though Thurot indignantly denied that he had ever threatened, or intended, to

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<sup>1</sup> *Belfast News-Letter*; *Streator's Public Gazetteer*, 1760; *Commons' Journals*.

<sup>2</sup> "Various kinds of picks, shovels, hatchets, and handsaws were lent to make up the barricades at the Turnpike against our saucy and deceitful invaders. Any one not knowing where to return them will leave them with Gilbert Orr."—Advertisement, *Belfast News-Letter*.

The *News-Letters* in the Linen Hall, which have been examined for particulars of the French invasion of 1760, are imperfect, many of them containing the details being torn out, as if to be preserved.

burn it. He was highly provoked that his advice to make the first and sudden attack on it was rejected; he declared he would have made the town pay him at once £50,000. The thanks of the House of Commons were given to Colonel Jennings, the Commandant at Carrickfergus, for his prudence and resolute conduct in making such a defence there with so weak a force, whereby he saved Belfast, by fighting on till the militia had time to assemble.<sup>1</sup> The town presented him with an address, accompanied with a silver cup.<sup>2</sup> A

<sup>1</sup> *News-Letter*, March 11, 1760.

<sup>2</sup> The following is the answer of Colonel Jennings, directed to Stewart Banks, Esq., and the rest of the inhabitants of Belfast :—

“GENTLEMEN,

“The discharge of the public service abroad will I hope in some measure plead my pardon for not expressing my most grateful thanks earlier for your late condescension in so highly honouring me with your favour and approbation of my conduct at Carrickfergus; the which to be thought worthy of by so respectable a body will ever be most sensibly remembered by me, who, with the most inviolable attachment to your interests, sincerely wishes, that the blessings of prosperity and flourishing commerce may wait and reward every individual of the antient and most loyal Corporation of Belfast. I have the honour to be, with sentiments of the most perfect esteem, Your most obliged and most humble Servant,

“JOHN JENNINGS.

“*July 8th, 1762.*”

Colonel Higginson was also presented with a silver cup on January 13th, 1761, on which was the following inscription :—

“To Major Joseph Higginson of the 62nd Regiment of Foot In Gratitude for his having exerted his great Military knowledge with the utmost Care, Vigilance, and Activity, for the Security of the Town of Belfast on the landing of the French Troops at Carrickfergus 21 February 1760 this Cup is presented by the Inhabitants of the Town of Belfast.”

John O’Keefe was another who, indirectly indeed, and rather in a slight manner, may be noticed in connection with the French invasion of 1760. He was well acquainted with Belfast. In his *Reminiscences*, published in 1826, vol. i., p. 205, the following passage occurs :—“When I was in Belfast and took drawings of that town for Lord Donegall I also took a view of Carrickfergus as from a distance of about 3 miles, and though a 4 wheeled carriage of Lord Donegall’s and his servants in Liveries attended me, yet such were the apprehensions and terrors that Thurot’s descent left upon the Carrickfergus people that the Mayor sent some of his officers on horseback to post off towards me, and make a strict enquiry what I was about by taking drawings of the Bay, the Town, and the Castle. . . . Certainly my dress and manner had somewhat of a Frenchified appearance with my hair fully powdered, a little rose bag, and a small gold

memoir<sup>1</sup> of Thurot was published; songs of his career were sung in street ballads; the siege of Carrickfergus was dramatised, and performed in the Theatre of this town; and so great a hold did the capture of the old castle take on the imagination and memory of the inhabitants for miles around, that men who had gone to the defence of Belfast in their youth might have been met with little more than half-a-century ago, who talked of the incidents of 1760 and the chief particulars in them with the greatest enthusiasm and clearness of recollection.

The French, after their defeat at sea, were brought back prisoners. Many of them were kept in Belfast, some sent to the neighbouring towns, and their presence here appeared to be an acquisition to the society of the place. Their stay was but short, as on May 13th, 1760, they embarked in two vessels on their return home. Before their departure they exhibited a proof of their gratitude and kindly disposition by giving a grand ball at the Market House, at which 200 ladies and gentlemen of the town and neighbourhood were present, and "who made a most brilliant appearance," according to the usual phraseology. It is also known that some of the Frenchmen remained behind, and took up their abode in the town.<sup>2</sup>

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laced cocked hat." The year in which O'Keefe made this drawing is not stated by him, but it must have been a considerable time after the capture of Carrickfergus.

An advertisement for the return of the defensive weapons appears just after the French discomfiture, issued by Stephen Havon, the Sovereign, on 7th March, 1760:—

"The several persons who have received the new guns and bayonets which were delivered out at the Market House on the 22nd ulto are desired forthwith to return the same at the shop of Henry and Robt Joy; if not, their names will be printed in the next Tuesday's paper and they will be sued for the value of them."

<sup>1</sup> This is the advertisement of the publication referred to:—

"Genuine & Curious Memoirs of the famous Capt Thurot, Written by the Rev. Francis Durand, With some of Mons. Thurot's Original Letters to that Gentleman now in England. To which is added a much more faithful and particular Account than has been hitherto Published of his Proceedings since his Sailing from the Coast of France. Belfast, Printed by Daniel Blow, 1760. Price 4d."

This is perhaps only one of many issued about the renowned Thurot.

<sup>2</sup> One of these was Bourdot, the famous hair-dresser and perfumer, whose life extended into this century.

The man who headed this invasion was really of Irish name and extraction. He was defeated, lost his life, and the opportunity of becoming the hero he might have been.<sup>1</sup>

It will now be desirable to collect, and that most briefly, a few more fragments of social characteristics from 1760 till the end of the century. They are too distant for memory to reach, but more authentic than any memory could retain. Still they are but mere unconnected observations, adapted to close finally the domestic history of the town.

“1762. Dominick the Harper performs at Tim’s Coffee House.” This coffee house was in Bridge Street.

“1765. The Countess of Donegall gave a Ball in the Market House to the ladies and gentlemen of the neighbourhood. It was the grandest and most brilliant that was ever seen in this place. . . . There were present many persons of distinction, 260 ladies, and 150 gentlemen.”

The old Market House which had witnessed these glories was a dark and dismal ruin—literally a ruin—in the early years of

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<sup>1</sup> Thurot, who might have cost Belfast so dear, was the grandson of an Irish officer of the name of Farrel, who had accompanied James the Second to France after the Revolution. The history of the grandson is quite romantic; he had been for a time at Glenarm, at Carlingford, and in Dublin, and from his knowledge of the northern coast of Ireland, his great intrepidity, and general talent, was selected by the French Government to command the expedition which took Carrickfergus, and the motive and end of which have been related. There is a most interesting and long account by no less a person than John Wesley (*Wesley’s Works*, vol. ii., pp. 535–36–37, 14 vol. edition) of Thurot’s proceedings at Carrickfergus. Wesley was on one of his periodical visits to Belfast, and on 5th May, 1760, went to Carrickfergus apparently with the chief intention of learning all he could about the famous Thurot. This was nearly three months after the event, but those who had been witnesses of it were anxious to give him every information. Thurot’s men were in a most exhausted and famished condition when they arrived; they were forced to take all the meat they could find, with some linen and wearing apparel; “but they neither hurt nor affronted man, woman, or child, nor did any mischief for mischief’s sake though sufficiently provoked.” The statement Wesley received of their entrance into the town and the fighting correspond with the relation of these events in the *History of Carrickfergus*, pp. 81–88; but the conduct and manner of Thurot during his stay in Carrickfergus appear much more subdued, or rather less bold, in Wesley’s Journal than in other accounts.

this century. Farther back, in point of time, a correspondent, now deceased, thus writes of it—

“There was a large empty room in the Market House—the entrance to it was from Corn Market, where the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Bristow the then Sovereign held his Court. I remember when a boy going up the stairs to look at it; and afterwards out of the window in the gable was the gallows erected.”

Could this have been the room clouded by the ghastly associations of 1798, in which the gay, festive, and crowded assemblage of thirty years before met for their enjoyment?

“Ap<sup>l</sup> 1767. A Carman was publicly whipped for stealing coals which he was entrusted to draw, *from the ship to the place where they were to be delivered.*” This spectacle was most probably in High Street.

“William Atkinson teaches Mathematics, Arithmetick, Geometry, Trigonometry, Navigation, Surveying, Astronomy, Dialling, Conic Sections, Guaging, Gunnery, Algebra, Fluxions, &c., *and continues to dress and sell Flax as usual.*”

“The Company at the Mill Gate will give a Benefit to the Poor. Pit and Gallery 2s. 2d. each. *The Sovereign will attend to take the Tickets.*”

More onerous were the duties of the Sovereign on another occasion. The owners of the swine which infested the streets, “to the discredit of the town,” were informed that if houses were not provided for them within five days they would be destroyed. This proclamation being unheeded, “the Sovereign on the 24th October 1768 with his own hands shot two, and offered to give 13 pence to every person who shoots one.” It is well to be particular as to the day and date of this exploit. It was a spectacle to behold the Sovereign armed with a pistol or an old flint musket, perhaps with some of the burgesses at his heels, moving stealthily along, probably in High Street or Castle Street, or some other frequented locality, to select a good position to bring down his game, and to hear every successful shot cheered by the street Arabs who followed his steps. It is true that the hunting of the wild boar is a regal sport amid the woods and over the hills and plains of continental Europe, but



this *travesty* of it through the streets of Belfast by the Sovereign, or elective king of the town, exciting no newspaper comment or other particular observation, is, to say the least, a very singular example of the customs of the time.

A person properly qualified is advertised for by the Sovereign, and to be a corporate officer, to act as "Bellhour for the Town of Belfast." The bellhour or bellman continued into this century, not perhaps with the official importance of earlier times when the town was so much smaller, but still, dressed in a blue cloak with a yellow border, a cocked hat on his head, he paraded the streets, giving utterance, when not engaged in the legitimate way of his calling, to some most original and pointed waggery.<sup>1</sup>

"A Sober Cleanly Cook, *not a Snuff Taker*, wanted."

A man is discharged from the new sugar-house "*because we found his fingers endued with too much magnetic attraction.*" Trade was certainly flourishing at the sugar-house, or the company would never have indulged in such a facetious sally.

Belfast in those years appears not to have been able to support a resident dentist, as a polite, insinuating, and no doubt a most discerning member of that profession, announces—

"Would the Dentist leaves Belfast, but his partner Mr. Sigmond will remain for a year longer if he gets encouragement, though at the same time he must confess that no *ladies he ever knew stood in less need of his assistance or the aid of any art.*"

Special assemblies were held every second Wednesday at the King's Arms, in North Street. This adjoined Long Lane, and was one of the most frequented hostelries in the town. The principal place, however, for the assemblies was the Market-house, and here they were held in great numbers for general

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<sup>1</sup> How the mighty will fall can best be known by those who have witnessed their decline. The writer can remember the bellman of Belfast—his cocked hat a little awry, his blue cloak faded, the yellow border frayed and dilapidated, and other visible signs of decay apparent—perambulating North Street when the old French war terminated, and proclaiming, "Pace now—Pace all over the world—except in Hudson's Entry, Law's Entry, Flea Lane, and Prince's Street."



charitable purposes, for the benefit of distressed individuals, or on some of those happy occasions when festivity necessarily followed success in arms, or when visits of members of the Donegall family to the town occurred.

Surely quack doctors are as old as human credulity, which is a plant of ancient growth. A member of the modest fraternity advertises, in the year 1764, that he has a medicine which contains 150 different drugs; of necessity its effect was irresistible. In another advertisement he proposes a small gratuity for an object, doubtless to be used in the mysterious alchemy of his craft, addressing the poor and the public in these words—

“I advise the Poor gratis at the Cock, Church Lane, and I do give Two Pence for the little round Bone in a pig’s skull. It lies inside between the eye and ear.

“T. M'DONALD.”

There was much sociability in the town in the last century. The inhabitants of a class generally knew one another, and as no means existed to visit distant worlds they made the most of their home opportunities. The ladies had instructors on the harpsichord and spinnet; and Mrs. Lanagan was prepared to teach them cookery, *and the French language if desired*.<sup>1</sup>

The earliest notice which has been observed of a library was by John Hay, in Bridge Street, in 1775.

The Belfast Musical Society advertises for “a Musician properly qualified to conduct their weekly Concerts, for which a genteel Salary will be given.” In 1769 it is specially stated that the gentlemen of the Belfast Musical Society had monthly concerts. Even a literary society in a moderate way was not wanting. About 1782 a temporary resident says—

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<sup>1</sup> The advertisement runs thus—“1755. Mrs. Smith has given up her Boarding School in Belfast and is succeeded by Mrs. Lanagan who teaches all manner of Cookery, and the French language if desired.”

Another Cookery School is opened by Margaret Cullen in Dalzell’s Row. “Proposes to attend Ladies at their own Houses who prefer home instruction to the public school.”—Advertisements in *News-Letter*.

Two cookery schools in Belfast more than a hundred years ago. Is there anything new under the sun?

"It was during this winter that I first became acquainted with that Eccentric and Satirist Anthony Williams, better known under his adopted designation of Pasquin, at this time a travelling portrait painter stopping at Belfast to take the likenesses of a few persons he had brought letters to. One of these was Mr. Griffiths, who was so struck with Anthony's conversation during a sitting that he introduced him to the Adelphi Club, a literary meeting of which I was a member."<sup>1</sup>

Here then were literature and painting in conjunction, as the writer proceeds to inform us that Williams painted a picture of all the members of the society sitting at a table, engaged, it may be inferred, in learned discussion. The Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge had its origin only a few years later, and a tolerably copious history of it, extracted from the books, is in the subjoined note.<sup>2</sup>

Sociality and the ordinary pleasures of life were greatly broken in upon by the poverty and distress which the bad seasons,

<sup>1</sup> John Bernard's *Retrospections of the Stage*, vol. i., p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> The Literary Society of Belfast was originated in 1801, and its transactions contain some extremely valuable papers, but as a society it does not come within the scope of these brief remarks.

The Belfast Library was first called the Belfast Reading Society, and was established in 1788. No great movement took place till 1791, and obscure must have been their proceedings up to that time, as in May, 1792, it is said that it is the interest of the society to remove their meetings from a public-house, and a committee was appointed to ascertain if they could have the use of the ball-room in the Poorhouse to deposit their books, and, it may be presumed, to assemble also for deliberation. This rather odd place for such a purpose does not appear to have been obtained, though frequently agitated subsequently, and a rent of five guineas a-year even was spoken of to be received by the Poorhouse for the room. In December, 1792, the front room of the Linen Hall is first mentioned as a convenient place for the library. It did not take immediate effect, and in 1793 "a committee was chosen to see if the Methodist Meeting-house now vacant would answer for the library." They met in the Donegall Arms in 1793, and it was not till February, 1794, that the following report is found in the books:—"Mr. Russell reported that he had engaged rooms in Ann Street for the library nearly opposite the Discount Office, whereupon it was resolved that the same be approved of, and that Mr. Russell be appointed to prepare one of the rooms for the books, and to get a few chairs and tables." Mr. or Captain Russell had been appointed librarian at the time, on the proposal of Dr. M'Donnell, and was the famous political character and United Irishman of the day. Where the books had been till this first settlement was made does not appear, but probably in the public-house in which the original members, who were only forty-five in number, though

combined with the political disturbances, produced at the end of the century. One of those times of misfortune from which no nation or town is exempt had arisen. Yet in 1797 the "First Hospital in Ireland for Fever was opened with Six Beds in Factory Row;" and in 1799 "a Bazaar for the benefit of the poor was held in Skipper Street by the young ladies of Belfast"—both most striking contrasts to the present action of the town in similar directions.

"Prior to 1792 the sole Medical relief publicly afforded to the

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eighty-nine in 1798, were accustomed to meet. They were placed in the Linen Hall only in the year 1801. Russell's salary and the rent of the room in Ann Street were not to exceed £30 a-year.

The tendencies of this society at its beginning, or its value to the cause of education, are more important than its long struggling efforts to procure a suitable location. It had higher aims than those which it now attends to, and interfered with matters which were not less creditable to it than beyond its present object. A Book Society in the town in 1792 proposed to unite with it, but they declined doing so on the grounds "that they intended to collect philosophical machines, and such other productions of nature and art as may be calculated to extend useful knowledge and excite a general spirit of enquiry." In 1793 it is stated that "Mr. Templeton is to have charge of the dried plants." Entries of such character are frequent. "Dr. M'Donnell reported his having received estimates for printing the Irish Music, and 20 Guineas were advanced by the Society to Mr. Bunting to go to London to see the Engraving done." This—1793—it may be remembered, was the year after the great meeting of Irish harpers in Belfast. But the Society did not stop at twenty guineas. "£50 transmitted by order to Mr. R. Jameson to be expended in the printing of the Irish Music." The society, in 1794, urges the propriety of a free school in the town, "the Sunday schools not being adequate for the general education of the town's people," which they declare is at a very low ebb.

These entries, and others of which they are but specimens, evince a strong desire to advance the cause of education. Many of a more general nature appear occasionally. Thus—"That Mr. Job Rider have the loan of the Philosophical Transactions for 1777 on giving Mr. Russell a promissory note for £100 to be given up on return of the Book."

17th September, 1796. The business of the committee was suspended "in consequence of the absence of Mr. Russell." He was charged with sedition, and was one of a considerable number who left this town in seven post chaises for Dublin, escorted by a strong military party, so that his duty as librarian came to a compulsory termination after holding the office for more than two years.

Very soon after their beginning, in 1788, they acquired the name of the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge, which they still retain, and under which they have become possessors of a large library, which is well supported, and accessible on very reasonable terms to the reading public.

indigent of the town was rendered through the instrumentality of the Charitable Society, and this was necessarily limited to those of the poor who received shelter and sustenance within the walls of the Institution.”<sup>1</sup>

The material comforts and appliances of the century were not so well attended to or understood as those which ministered to a certain refinement. The danger of the town from fire, for instance, so vitally important, was only guarded against by regulations such as the following. A great fire took place in the sugar-house in Waring Street, on which the purchase of an engine, “of the size of those called garden engines,” was taken into consideration; and “it was directed that a sluice be made at the river opposite the Weigh House to be let down every night and so constructed as to raise six inches of water at Mrs. Legg’s.” It is likewise directed that “twelve or more round holes covered with flags be made in Front Street (High Street) at different parts of the arch which covers the river; that six movable barrel pumps be made; that six decent men be taught to work, take asunder, and put them together at a salary of Thirty shillings a year each, and a crown every time they attend at a real fire;” and finally, “a cistern to hold 5000 gallons of water is recommended to be formed in North Street or Donegall Street.” This was the fire brigade of more than ninety years ago, and the means at its disposal, all proving no very great advance from the old Town Book of the seventeenth century. It is not related if any of these notable plans for subduing fires were ever put in operation, nor in what part of Donegall Street or North Street the projector contemplated the placing of the cistern, or perhaps the ornamental piece of water.

Yet this town, so miserable in important requirements, so unprovided with what we consider the necessities of life, so destitute of the commonplace comforts and resources now everywhere around us, was lauded for its material eminence. The Town Council at the present time, recording at the beginning of the year the

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Malcolm on the Medical Charities of Belfast.

progress in that which has just ended, can write of the 1100 houses built in the preceding twelve months,<sup>1</sup> of the vast mills, warehouses, docks, and public buildings, and of the great additions to the population. No such practice was known to the poor little Corporation of the last century, yet the town appears to have been looked on with as much admiration and pride by those who then lived in it as by their successors now who witness its progress on a scale so immeasurably different. They conclude for once, as newspaper editorial matter of the eighteenth century, the summing up of progress for a specified period by saying that "few towns of the same size have a greater number of elegant structures for public uses, and yet not many years ago no town in Ireland of equal consequence made so poor an appearance in public erections." The preceding extracts are all chiefly from the newspaper of the period. Some of them may be deemed unimportant and below the dignity even of local history; but a volume of such, collected with discrimination from the public prints of the day, could be made highly curious, entertaining, and instructive. They would exhibit with indelible colouring "the very age and body of the time," revive the names and employments of those who contributed their share to make Belfast what it is, and give, in their naked simplicity, views of life, manners, and customs more real than any which general or half-conjectural language could supply.

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<sup>1</sup> This is the last Report for 1876—

PROGRESS OF BELFAST—STATISTICS.

No. of private streets, and extensions of streets, sewered, paved, &c., under Borough Surveyor's directions during the year 1876	...	...	...	...	35
Do. during the last ten years	...	...	...	...	750
No. of houses and buildings of which plans were approved in year 1876	...	...	...	...	1,342
No. of buildings erected in year 1876	...	...	...	...	1,101
Do. during the last 15 years	...	...	...	...	18,107
Valuation of borough on 1st Jan., 1877	...	...	...	...	£503,164
Do. do. on 1st Jan., 1862	...	...	...	...	£278,807
Increase of valuation in 15 years	...	...	...	...	£224,357
Population of the borough in the year 1871	...	...	...	...	174,394
Do. (approximately) in the year 1877	...	...	...	...	210,000



## CHAPTER XXI.

## THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY IN BELFAST.

A GREAT commotion occurred in Belfast in 1770-71, occasioned by the action of the body called the Hearts of Steel. Some valuable, and, it is believed, original materials regarding this outbreak have been obtained. The Hearts of Steel having been an agrarian combination, it may be asked why a town should have been in any manner connected with the proceedings of those who assumed the name. This was caused by the fact, or at any rate the current statement, that it was on the Donegall estates adjoining Belfast the association had its beginning, and that the owner of this town and some merchants in it incurred the animosity of the agricultural body in the neighbourhood for dealing with lands in their occupation to their supposed injury and loss. The old leases granted by the Donegall family at the commencement of the century, when the common rent of arable land was about 2s. 6d. an acre, had fallen; and it was now considered, after so great a lapse of time, and the occurrence of some circumstances leading to an increased value of produce, that eight shillings an acre<sup>1</sup> for land not far from Belfast would not be unreasonable. It is impracticable now to reach the exact truth in details, or to ascertain whether or not fines were proposed to be exacted besides an increased rent. An eminent historian uses the following words on this subject:—"The Tenants, all Protestants, offered the interest of the money in addition to the rent, but speculative Belfast capitalists paid the Fine, and took the land over the heads of the Tenants to sublet."<sup>2</sup> It is not said

<sup>1</sup> This was the increased rent, according to the statement of Mr. Samuel M'Skimin, who gave much attention to this subject.

<sup>2</sup> *The English in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 119.



whether at the old or at a new and increased rent. The end of it was, however, that Lord Donegall received from "the speculative Belfast capitalists," according to rumour, so great a sum as £200,000, and Mr. Talbot, his agent, £25,000 more as his share of the spoil. The historian, who has with much propriety and judgment, no doubt, introduced a portion of our local history into his work, states broadly, but in more moderate terms, that "many of the Antrim leases having fallen simultaneously, Lord Donegall demanded £100,000 for the renewal of them." This was, it is to be supposed, the amount the capitalists paid, but which the agriculturists could not. The dispossession of the latter was immediately followed by acts of insubordination and violence. The feeling and practices spread over much of Antrim and adjoining counties, and continued for several years. Lord Donegall's participation in the affair earned for him a notoriety which even at this distance of time occasionally appears. The onslaught of the insubordinate body into this town formed the subject of a philippic a few years since by a famous living orator and lawyer, who made this riot in Belfast an example, or proof, of the antiquity of tenant-right in Ulster, and the danger of tampering with it, or infringing on it; and later still, the character of the Lord Donegall of 1770 has been assailed, by the very distinguished writer alluded to, in extraordinary language<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> The words used regarding the Earl of Donegall with respect to this matter are—"Lord Donegall was rewarded with a Marquisate. If rewards were proportioned to deserts a fitter retribution would have been forfeiture and Tower Hill." —*The English in Ireland*, vol. ii., p. 120.

It may be stated in passing that Lord Donegall was not raised to the Marquisate till twenty years after—namely, in 1791; and certainly the measure of retribution here mentioned is only such as is awarded by both civilised and uncivilised nations to the most atrocious crimes. This Lord Donegall, so written of, was one of the most generous, perhaps the most generous, of his family to the town. Even if he received the immense sum spoken of, and Mr. Talbot, his agent, £25,000 more on his own account, the language applied to him is unjustifiable. But did he receive it? The amount, it is true, is not the point in consideration, but oppressive conduct to his tenantry; still it may with confidence be stated that such sums were never received from Belfast merchants in 1770 either by landlord or agent, and that the language of Mr. Froude in this particular was founded on gross error. In confirmation of it, the following extract from a com-

for his alleged dealings with his tenants, one consequence of which was an invasion of Belfast by a small army of exasperated individuals, the immediate occasion of which is about to be narrated.

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munication from the present respected agent of the Donegall estates, James Torrens, Esq., is here inserted:—

“I have taken all possible pains to elicit information from the Earl of Donegall’s Lease Books of the period you advert to—namely, 1769 & 1770, and I am perfectly satisfied that the pretence of £200,000 having been raised for Fines on the making of Leases is entirely erroneous. In fact it is, as you anticipate, an ‘outrageous misstatement.’

“I give you overleaf a List of 5 Leases of considerable Holdings in Carnmoney and Ballyclare District made to Belfast Merchants. The total quantity of Land demised to them is 1778a. 3r. 3p. Irish measure, and the Fines noted in the Books as paid amount to only £1202, being less than 14s. an acre, tho’ the reserved Rents were very small. Supposing, as I think we safely may, this to be a fair indication or average of the rule then applied to other cases, the total amount of Fines raised must have been comparatively small. The complaint is in fact out of all reason. Having regard to the extent of the Estate in the Barony of Belfast and the Seale referred to, I do not see how even so much as £20,000 could have been raised by the making of Leases to parties not occupying Tenants, and my belief is that the amount was considerably under that sum.”

The particulars on the overleaf above referred to are also here printed. They may interest some Belfast people at this day. It will be remembered the acres were Irish measure:—

Lease to Joseph Wallace of 360a. 1r. 8p. in Ballycraigy for 41 years or three lives from 1st May 1769. Rent £87 10s. 0d. Fine £72.

Lease made to William Gregg of the Half Town of Ballyclaverty containing 252a. 3r. 21p. for a like term from 1 May 1770. Rent £57 10s. 0d. Fine £400.

Lease made to Doctor Alexander Halliday of 539a. 1r. 13p. in Ballyduff and Ballyhenry for a like term. Rent £120 16s. 0d. Fine £500.

Lease made to Hercules Heyland of £259a. 1r. 33p. in Ballyvesey and Ballycraigy for a like term. Yearly Rent £69 10s. 0d. Fine £60.

Lease made to Robert Wallace of 366a. 3r. 8p. in Ballymurphy for a like term. Rent £100 2s. 0d. Fine £170.

Lease made to Waddel Cunningham of 371a. 2r. 12p. in Ballypalliday for a like term. Rent £174 5s. 0d. Fine not named.

Leases were made to Thomas Greg of 599a. 0r. 4p. in Lisnalinchy & 163a. 3r. 37p. in Ballyhone & 241a. 2r. 10p. in Ballylinny, but the fines paid are not noted in the Lease Book.

This should be sufficient to set aside the extravagant stories which have obtained currency regarding the pecuniary connection of Belfast with the Hearts of Steel. The sum received by Lord Donegall is most preposterous; there were no millionaires, no great spinning mills or other means of producing such wealth in the town in those days, and no reasonable doubt can be felt that the entire sum received for all the fines was comparatively small. Popular feeling among possibly interested or misled parties ran strongly then and since in favour of what

With the manner in which the land occupiers were treated, or the beginning or causes of the Hearts of Steel, this work is not concerned. The preceding introduction is necessary to explain how Belfast, through its men of wealth, came to be mixed up with it. Two wealthy merchants particularly were named—how untruly will certainly be admitted—as the reputed suppliers of the lord of the soil with fabulous sums of money for lands lately in the occupation of others. They must have already entered into possession, as cattle belonging to one of them were maliciously injured, which brings us directly to the part of the story that alone affects Belfast, and which may be denominated at the least rather a remarkable historical episode. It is thus related—

“1770. Friday, December 21st. David Douglas, farmer, of Templepatrick, reputed to be a leader among the insurgents, and

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were called the oppressed tenantry. Even the mild spirit of John Wesley was roused ; he was in Belfast when the history of the Hearts of Steel was a common topic of conversation, and his language would almost appear to be exculpatory of their proceedings. He writes in his Journal :—

“1773. Tuesday, June 15th.—When I came to Belfast, I learned the real cause of the late insurrections in this neighbourhood. Lord Donegal, the proprietor of almost the whole country, came hither to give his tenants new leases. But when they came, they found two merchants of the town had taken their farms over their heads ; so that multitudes of them, with their wives and children, were turned out to the wide world. It is no wonder that, as their lives were now bitter to them, they should fly out as they did. It is rather a wonder that they did not go much farther. And if they had, who would have been most in fault ? Those who were without home, without money, without food for themselves and families ? or those who drove them to this extremity ?”

This language of John Wesley is certainly striking, and the constant repetition of it on many occasions not less so, till it expanded into the assertion that thousands of families were driven out of their farms to make way for Catholic tenants who proposed to give higher rents. The very part of the County of Antrim in which the Hearts of Steel began is now one of the most Presbyterian districts in Ulster, so that it might not be easy to reconcile this apparent contradiction. Arthur Young, who was in the country at the period, and had a much better acquaintance with land questions, does not write at all in the same tone as Wesley, but rather palliates Lord Donegal's conduct. A Committee of the House of Commons came to the conclusion that the rents demanded were not extravagant. There is no doubt, however, that Lord Donegal became unpopular with many well-informed persons for his conduct, and, from various incidental observations, the feeling long continued, though he never received in fines £20,000—perhaps not the half of it.

charged with aiding and assisting in *houghing* (maiming) some cattle belonging to Mr. Gregg was taken prisoner in Belfast this day by Waddell Cunningham, and for security lodged in the Barrack where there were about 40 soldiers, a rescue being apprehended if he had been sent direct to prison.<sup>1</sup> The capture of this person excited no little commotion, and it was immediately resolved that his liberation should be effected. On the morning of the 23rd an assembly of persons, avowedly Hearts of Steel, met at Templepatrick for this purpose; proceeded to the Meeting House there, and warned the people out, many of whom obeyed their summons, and assisted to gather others. The entire body when assembled proceeded towards Belfast, armed with guns, pistols, swords, and ruder weapons. The grand *rendezvous* was held at a house on the Shore road called the *Stag's Head*, when their number was found to amount to about 1200 men, chiefly from Templepatrick, Doagh, Ballyclare, and Carnmoney. Here they were formed into regular order by an old soldier, called Meathes or Matthews, who afterwards gave them the slip on their entering Belfast. In their march upon the town a man of the name of Crawford was in front, on horseback, carrying before him several iron Crowbars rolled up in hay ropes for the purpose of forcing open gates or doors. On their approach to the town Stewart Banks the Sovereign, and about Twenty five other gentlemen, took refuge in the Barrack,<sup>2</sup> and closed the Gate. On the arrival of the Steel Men in Belfast they surrounded the Barrack, and sent in a written message demanding the release of David Douglas a prisoner therein. To this Mr. Banks gave a direct refusal, on which they fired many shots at the gate and over the wall, but failing of the desired effect, a party proceeded to the house of Waddell Cunningham,<sup>3</sup> broke it open, and were in the act of destroying the furniture, when Dr. Haliday, an eminent physician of Belfast, actuated by compassion, and dreading lest the town might be destroyed, mingled with the crowd assembled at Mr. Cunningham's house. After expostulating with them in vain he was taken prisoner by them and sworn, that he would immediately repair to the Barrack and procure the release of the prisoner, or, failing in having it effected that he would return and surrender himself a hostage. The Doctor had just reached the Barrack on this embassy, passing

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<sup>1</sup> To Carrickfergus.

<sup>2</sup> This was the old Barrack in Barrack Street, built in 1739.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Cunningham's house was at the foot of Hercules Street. The Provincial Bank now stands on the site.

through an immense multitude consisting of the people from the country intermixed with those of the town, when the gate was thrown open by the military, who fired upon the assailants, killed five persons and wounded nine others. By the Doctor's humane interference farther firing was prevented. In the mean time the party who were destroying the house of Mr. Cunningham, growing impatient at the Doctor's delay, and conceiving that he had deceived them, set the house on fire, whereby the safety of the town was in the utmost degree endangered. Under the same deception they threatened to destroy Dr. Haliday's own house, and fired some shots into that of Mr. Gregg the partner of Mr. Cunningham. To prevent the destruction of the town it was deemed expedient to give up the prisoner to the insurgents, which was accordingly done about one o'clock in the morning, on which they retired,<sup>1</sup> and the fire was extinguished."

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<sup>1</sup> On this subject Mr. Trotter, writing to a friend, uses these words—"You have seen in the public papers an account of the dreadful riots at Belfast. I send you a poem said to be written by a Dr. Marriot on that occasion, inhumanly severe against Lord Donegall and some of his friends. Down, 24th January, 1771."

The following are a few extracts from the poem, which is among the *Pinkerton MSS.*, though it may be extremely doubtful whether they be worthy of preservation or not. It would seem from it that in Belfast, as well as in the country, Lord Donegall and his agent, Mr. Talbot, were charged with oppression to tenants. There is a considerable volume of Dr. Marriot's poems still to be found among old Belfast books. It is on moral subjects. The poem drawn forth by the Hearts of Steel is called the "The Satyric Muse." The extracts overstep the bounds of poetic licence, but are more moderate than many other verses.

"To Talbot now the tenants all repair  
 With sanguine hope soon changed to sad despair—  
 Him as a friend they hospitably greet,  
 To keep him such, with costly viands treat—  
 'Tis well, he cries, they're rich—'tis just that they  
 Who live like princes, should like princes pay.

"Of ancient tenants, the industrious race  
 Strongly attach'd to their forefather's place,  
 Who just to live and pay their Lord made shift—  
 Now the unfeeling heart can turn adrift.  
 What are the crimes that to their charge you lay?  
 Fines you demand, and fines they cannot pay.

"To crown the whole—each must his farm resign  
 Or tender down a most enormous fine—



So far the private narrative, which in its main statements is correct, as the Proclamation issued by the Government repeats the principal facts of the case in similar terms, declaring—

“Whereas we have received information on oath that on the evening of the 23rd December last several hundreds of people who have distinguished themselves by the name of Hearts of Steel, most of whom were armed with Firelocks, did in a riotous and tumultuous manner march into the Town of Belfast in order to rescue David Douglas of said County, Farmer, who had been committed to Gaol for injuring and maiming the cattle of Thomas Gregg; and that they repaired to Stewart Banks Esq. Sovereign of said Town, and demanded

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Ejects the old helpless tenants and applies  
To money'd men who wish to realize.  
None but the wealthy can his audience win  
For want of money is a mortal sin.”

“He boasted that he had raised the value of the estate from £17,500 to £35,000 per annum, and received £200,000 in fines besides his own fees of £25,000 more.”  
The poem has probably been the origin of this monstrous fabrication.

“Some of the tenants still remain that feel  
Their wrongs, and can resent with Hearts of Steel,  
Bravely resolv'd in mutual league unite  
To keep possession, and support their right—  
Ready their tribute to their Lord to pay  
But not to those who snatch'd their farms away.

Justly, much-injured George Macartney, did'st thou with zeal  
And ardent aspect to your Lord appeal—  
Thou to whose father this devoted town  
Doth all its wealth and all its grandeur own,  
Which to improve with wondrous skill and care  
He toiled in thought, nor sums immense did spare,  
With mind capacious this poor spot did view  
Cover'd with sorry cots, and those but few,  
Which foaming waters threaten'd to confound,  
Sweep to the seas, or whelm in boggy ground—  
Pitying he saw,—with mighty art restrain'd  
The raging waves, the swampy marshes drain'd,  
Then to old Ocean's fury set a bound,  
Rears goodly structures in now solid ground,  
Nor stops he here, but draws the stream of trade  
In a full current tow'rd's the town he made;  
Hence to his Lord this vast increase is found  
An annual tribute of two thousand pound.”



the release of Douglas. If not they would fire the town; and upon his refusal they broke into the Dwelling House of Waddell Cunningham, set the same on fire, and pulled down and destroyed the furniture. Whereupon the said Sovereign to prevent the destruction of the town released Douglas."

A third evidence remains of this attack on the town, but as it is in a form in which embellishment is tolerated, it must not be put in juxtaposition with the hard and fast lines of a Government proclamation. Its facts are substantially the same, though in poetical language, and many a time it was sung or said, when the storm had subsided, to gaping crowds and admiring rustics.<sup>1</sup>

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### <sup>1</sup> HEARTS OF STEEL.

#### A SONG.

The Twenty Third of December away we did go,  
 To visit Belfast—for it must be so—  
 To seek for our Brother, if that he was there,  
 And straight to release him no pains we would spare.  
 We went to the Barrack and there we did stand  
 And of Banks and Cunningham we did demand  
 The pris'ner in durance, we knew not for what cause,  
 But as they pretended he had broken their laws.  
 Then Banks he made answer, and this he did say  
 We'll not lose our prisoner any such way,  
 For on to morrow morning before break of day  
 We'll hire a Boat and hoise him away.  
 Now the Gate was thrown open and there was displayed  
 The Soldiers in Arms as they stood on Parade,  
 But with treachery base they poured forth their shot  
 And three of our brave heroes lay dead on the spot.  
 One of the three who was killed in the throng  
 Unto our Company did not belong,  
 His curiosity led him to spy—  
 And for that same reason he there had to die.  
 With purpose unchanged we retired to plan  
 How soonest to free and unshackle our man,  
 And as we were going we thought on a scheme  
 Which was to set Cunningham's house in a flame.

The ballad ends here, but this is most probably only a part of the entire. It mentions also that only three men were killed by the military, the prose narrative making five the number. It omits all notice of Dr. Haliday's humane and courageous interference, but curiously alludes to the necessity of taking the prisoner to Carrickfergus by water, the land journey not being possible through the excited Steel men, or too perilous to attempt.

This great riot and its immediate preliminary preparations took place on a Sunday. The Hearts of Steel were said to have been chiefly Presbyterians,<sup>1</sup> from which it must be concluded that their feelings were greatly stirred to induce them to disregard the sanctity of the Sabbath, so generally observed by those of that communion in a sober and devout spirit. Mr. Cunningham immediately advertised for the restoration of such property as had been saved from the ruin of his house, and though for a long time the Hearts of Steel continued to agitate the country, Belfast was not again disturbed by their presence, the one great effort being the only example of their lawless actions in this town.<sup>2</sup> They had many sympathisers who con-

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur Young's *Tour in Ireland*, p. 132.

<sup>2</sup> The prose narrative and the ballad regarding the Hearts of Steel were kindly furnished by the Rev. Classen Porter, of Larne. The former was collected and written by the late Mr. Samuel M'Skimin, of Carrickfergus, and what has been here copied forms but a small portion of the whole. Mr. M'Skimin continues the subsequent history of the insurgents in the parishes adjoining Belfast and Carrickfergus, mentioning the principal persons implicated; their attacks upon rents, cesses, tithes, and their thorough insubordination; the names of those killed, and of the greater number executed. All travellers in the country from 1769 to 1773 do not fail to notice these events, the great emigration to America which followed them, and the remote effects of the emigrations on the results of the American War. Let the last part of the story be correct or not, the lawless proceedings of the Hearts of Steel, or those whom the emigrants left behind, were not limited to Belfast, but embraced different objects, and extended over a wide area of the country. There are many letters respecting them in the Civil and Miscellaneous Correspondence in the Record Office. There is a long one from Major Murray from Belfast, describing the calls for military protection from different places, and ending with this account—

“I likewise received a Letter from the Bishop of Down and Connor and the Magistrates of Lisburn requesting that a party sh<sup>d</sup> be sent there immediate for the Preservation of that Town as they expected the Hearts of Steel this Night. I sent all the men of our Regiment that I could, so that only one Company of the 53rd remains in this Town. Belfast, 15th March, 1772.” This is almost like the language used in the first alarm at the same place of the great rebellion of 1641.

The spirit of cultivation had arisen in the land, and was necessary to meet the commonly increased rents. The agricultural population generally would have preferred the old grazing system at the low rents. This may partly explain the following notice at about the same time as the preceding, which discloses very unmeaning and mischievous propensities. It is a long letter in the Civil Correspondence from Hercules Langford Rowley to Sir George Macartney, the Irish Secretary and the future Lord Macartney, dated 12th March, 1772, in which he

demned the harsh treatment which, as they alleged, had produced these disturbances. Pamphlets are not rare which take this view of the subject, and adopt a line of reasoning much akin to the tenant-right arguments of late days.

Nothing took place after this extraordinary occurrence which can properly be incorporated with the general or public history of the town till the revolt of the American colonies, the prelude to events which almost revolutionised the world. America and France united against England; the war of privateers was opened, and the deeds of daring which followed have been the themes of great writers and great histories. Home events only can here engage attention. It is therefore to be recorded that Paul Jones, in the interest of America, appeared with an armed ship in the Lough of Belfast, in April, 1778. The Draper was lying in Garmoyle with a valuable cargo of linen cloth, and it was feared that the object of the privateer was to seize the vessel. But Jones, on this occasion at least, was above such petty matters, when there was a king's ship in sight. The Drake sloop of war was lying opposite Carrickfergus. Jones did not hesitate to bring his ship into the Lough; his intention was to capture the Drake by surprise, but the weather being unfavourable he was unable to make the attempt at that time. Not given to a moment's inaction, he proceeded across the channel to Whitehaven, spiked the guns in that place, and burned several vessels; then sailed to Kircudbright, where he was born, plundered the house of Lord Selkirk, and early on the morning of the 24th of April appeared again in Belfast Lough to try his fortune with the Drake. He was successful; the two ships, nearly equal in force, engaged the same day, and after a short action the Ranger, which was the name of the ship commanded by Jones, overpowered and captured her opponent.

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says that "the insurgents are using great threats against the great mills lately built by Mr. Rowley Heyland." He describes them as of much value, mentions the stock contained in them, and that their loss would ruin that part of the country in which they were (Crumlin); he tells where the place is, as if it were almost an unknown land, describes its distance from neighbouring towns, and that Mr. Heyland will meet the soldiers who were to protect the mills at a certain place.

The inhabitants of Belfast were thrown into excessive alarm by this contest almost before their eyes, and the account of it as written reads like a chapter of romance. The intrepidity and humanity of Jones or the gallantry of Lieutenant Dobbs did not interfere with the action of the inhabitants. A war had commenced, the end of which no one could foresee, and their own insecure condition and the weakness of the Government proved the danger to be imminent. No resource was open but self-defence, to which they resorted; and, not satisfied with resolutions to defend their hearths and homes, they determined also to seek fortune on that element which was as open to them as to Frenchmen or Americans. Privateers were fitted out in Belfast; their departure from the quay, the number of their guns and sailors, are related with no less enthusiasm than the confidence which was expressed of their return with valuable prizes. But warfare at sea could not meet the emergency, and in the August of the same year on which Jones with such impunity had performed his several exploits in four or five days in England, Ireland, and Scotland, the inhabitants of Belfast applied to the Government for that protection to which they considered themselves entitled, but the Government acknowledged its weakness and inability to give them assistance. Then commenced the Volunteers—the armed citizens of Ireland—and before entering on a short history of that important association, a description of the size and population of the town in which it originated, and which was destined through the remainder of the century to obtain great political notoriety, will be quite appropriate.

Belfast in 1778 was a small town of 12,000 inhabitants, but its maritime character and the enterprise of its inhabitants stamped it with an importance beyond that very moderate population.<sup>1</sup> So fallacious is conjecture in population, that in

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<sup>1</sup> By way of preserving a perfect account at this critical period of our actual condition in population and employments the following table is introduced, which will make the progressive increase and state of the town perfectly clear.

In the middle of the well-known publication called *Belfast Politics* the following long article respecting the population and employments of the people in 1782

1778 John Wesley makes the population 30,000, a most erroneous guess. It was only 12,000 in the earliest days of the Volunteers, and its topographical state has been described in the chapter of the eighteenth century relating to that subject.

and 1791, prefaced by this note, which is fully as applicable to the present work as to that in which they are copied, will be found. "Though the following is not connected with the general subject of this Book, it is inserted here as a means of preserving lists which will, at a future day, be considered curious." This then is the future day, and they should be considered curious. They are the last formal and detailed population returns which this work can now contain. 12,000 persons in 1778 might correspond with 13,000 in 1782.

Population in the Town and Suburbs of Belfast, taken 1st January, 1782, by Mr. Robert Hyndman.

Houses, 2026, containing  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 6,133 \text{ Males.} \\ 6,972 \text{ Females.} \end{array} \right.$

13,105 in all.

There were also in town 388 looms, mostly employed in the cambrick, lawn, and cotton branches; 13 stocking looms, 1 hair loom, 4 carding machines, and 25 spinning jennies for cotton, the number of the latter daily increasing.

There were the following number of each trade :—

Butchers	...	...	...	87	Saddlers	...	...	...	...	14
Bakers	...	...	...	40	Sawyers	...	...	...	...	26
Barbers	...	...	...	28	Smiths	...	...	...	...	78
Coopers	...	...	...	163	Staymakers	...	...	...	...	6
Carpenters	...	...	...	68	Tailors	...	...	...	...	65
Cabinet Makers	...	...	...	22	Tanners and Curriers	...	...	...	...	33
Chandlers	...	...	...	27	Weavers (one of them a Female)	...	...	...	...	389
Hatters	...	...	...	18	Watchmakers	...	...	...	...	14
Hosiers	...	...	...	7	Wheelwrights	...	...	...	...	9
Masons	...	...	...	48	Sundry other Trades	...	...	...	...	166
Nailers	...	...	...	27	(The absence of specification is a want.)					
Painters	...	...	...	9	Tobacco Spinners, giving employ-	...	...	...	...	
Ropers	...	...	...	20	ment to 152 children	...	...	...	...	38
Reedmakers	...	...	...	6	Publicans, one to every 16th House	...	...	...	...	119
Shoemakers (two of them Females)	...	...	...	224	(Should be one to every 17th House.)					

By the above it appears the Town and Suburbs were increased since 1st January, 1757, being 25 years, nearly one half, the following being the then state of the same :—

1,779 Houses, containing  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 7,933 \text{ Protestants} \\ 556 \text{ Catholics} \end{array} \right.$  } or 8,549 in all.

There were at that period 399 looms, and 1800 people able to bear arms.

Increase in the 25 years, from 1757 to 1782, ... 247

Do. in Inhabitants ... .. 4,556

In 1791, the Population, number of Houses, &c., as taken again by Mr. Hyndman, consisted of—



The Volunteers of Belfast were the first in Ireland to assume organised military form. The Roll of the first company is still extant, and is dated 17th March, 1778. The names of the officers and men are all set forth; they were in four divisions, described as light infantry, second, third, and grenadier divisions, with band

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2,909 Houses occupied.

198 Do. untenanted, chiefly new Houses.

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3,107 Do. containing  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 8,932 \text{ Males.} \\ 9,388 \text{ Females.} \end{array} \right.$

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18,320 in all.

322 Looms employed at Cotton.

129 Do. at Cambrick & Linen.

28 Do. at Sail Cloth.

16 Do. at Stockings.

The number of each Trade—

Butchers	...	...	...	39	Reed Makers	...	...	...	6
Bakers	...	...	...	67	Shoe Makers (two Females)	...	...	...	312
Barbers	...	...	...	30	Saddlers	...	...	...	22
Coopers	...	...	...	115	Sawyers	...	...	...	37
Carpenters	...	...	...	169	Smiths	...	...	...	69
Cabinet Makers	...	...	...	40	Staymakers	...	...	...	15
Chandlers	...	...	...	29	Taylors (one Female)	...	...	...	100
Hatters	...	...	...	38	Tanners and Curriers	...	...	...	45
Hosiers	...	...	...	16	Weavers (six Females)	...	...	...	679
Masons	...	...	...	68	Watchmakers	...	...	...	22
Nailers	...	...	...	41	Wheelwrights	...	...	...	6
Painters	...	...	...	17	Sundry other Trades	...	...	...	220
Ropers	...	...	...	35	(These last are still unclassified.)				

Tobacco Spinners, giving employment to 20 children, being a decrease of 165 in 9½ years, the consequence of impolitic revenue laws, ... 5  
Publicans under License, being one to every Seventeenth House, ... 167

By the above it appears the Town and Suburbs have increased in less than ten years—

Houses ... 1,081

Inhabitants ... 5,215

As Ballymacarrett is only separated from the Town of Belfast by the Long Bridge, the following view of its progressive improvement is given :—

In 1781				In 1791			
Houses,	...	...	96	Houses,	...	...	179
Males,	...	...	195	Males,	...	...	596
Females,	...	...	224	Females	...	...	612
<hr/> 419				<hr/> 1,208			

There is a vast body of information in the preceding tables. Placed as they are they do not interfere with the narrative, and give a good general idea of the progress of the town from 1757 to 1791 as founded on population and employments.



and all accompaniments, and Mr. Bryson as Presbyterian chaplain. They had made a beginning in 1777, but stood to their arms in reality when informed by Sir Richard Heron, the Irish Secretary, in reply to the application of the Sovereign and Burgesses for a force to protect the town, that no military could be sent to Belfast but "a troop or two of horse or part of a company of invalids." When the people took the matter into their own hands at this most unsatisfactory reply, the same official informed them on the 18th of August, 1778, that "the Lord Lieutenant very much approves of the spirit of the inhabitants of Belfast who have formed themselves into companies for the defence of the town." In the next year—so rapid had been their progress—"The three Volunteer Companies of this place paraded in their uniforms for the purpose of receiving the thanks of the House of Lords for their spirited exertions in defence of their country, which was read at the head of each company by their respective captains."<sup>1</sup> Those of the highest rank in the country were Volunteers; the movement was universal, the enthusiasm unlimited; the clergy commended the association from their pulpits on Sundays—on the same day the volunteer guns resounded in our streets.<sup>2</sup> As a body they have been stigmatised as unqualified for any real warfare, but no unprejudiced person can decry their original necessity, or the effects which they produced on the public well-being. They sought no reward or wages from the Government; neither did they take any military oath or obligation. They associated, they said, in consideration of the impending war with France and the intestine commotions likely to arise. As a practical proof of their value, they guarded the town at night throughout the winter of 1786,<sup>3</sup> and acted as

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<sup>1</sup> *Belfast News-Letter*, October, 1779.

<sup>2</sup> One illustration of this is sufficient.

"Sunday, 1st August, 1779. The Three Volunteer Companies paraded with their Arms and Uniforms and marched to the Old Meeting House, where an excellent Sermon for the occasion was delivered by the Rev<sup>d</sup> Mr. Crombie, from whence they returned to the Parade and fired Three Volleys in commemoration of the permanent establishment of the Hanoverian succession."

<sup>3</sup> *Belfast News-Letter*, 1786.

conservators of the peace on many other occasions. If not thoroughly adapted for the tented field, they suited their purpose, and the members of the Belfast First Volunteer Company in their scarlet uniforms and black velvet facings possessed more than the trappings of war, and they and all their companions in arms had both intrepidity and knowledge enough to protect the country and the town from all their enemies. Besides defending them from foreign aggression, if need were, they had other objects in view of pressing necessity, as they considered, and which they resolved to redress. The Volunteers demanded freedom of trade, parliamentary reform, and, afterwards, parliamentary independence. The trade of Ireland was cramped by partial legislation and most impolitic commercial laws. English manufacturers, traders, and the Government itself imagined that Ireland's prosperity was so far England's impoverishment, instead of the more common sense opinion of modern times that both countries could and should rise and grow rich together. The pages of numerous works of the Volunteer era which discuss the financial and statistical condition of Ireland, abound with denunciations of the trade laws by which the country was oppressed. The produce of Ireland could only find its way to the colonies and British possessions by being first sent to England and there reshipped; and the productions of the same rich lands beyond the seas were subject to like regulations. They too, if intended for Ireland, had first to go to England, after passing possibly at times within view of our coasts, be there transferred to English ships, and after this most clumsy and expensive process landed at an Irish port for sale and consumption. This wonderful method of doing business received the name of the Navigation Laws, and was long the commercial system of the two countries. It continued till the time of the Volunteers, and a great day of rejoicing was witnessed in Belfast on the 6th of March, 1780, when the news arrived that an Act had been passed in the British Parliament, and had received the king's assent, granting to Ireland, as it is expressed, "free trade with America." The town was brilliantly illuminated; the Volun-

teers let their guns and cannons be heard, and an address was forwarded to his Majesty from the Sovereign, Burgesses, and principal inhabitants, thanking him most warmly and dutifully for the petty concession. The prohibition against the export of certain products raised in "this poor Realm," as it is truly called in divers statutes, was even more unjust than the colonial interdiction. This refers particularly to wool, which was absolutely forbidden to be exported to any place but England, for the encouragement of the manufacturers of that favoured country. It is quite ludicrous to read in the books which treat of our sage political economy in the eighteenth century of the devices adopted to get Irish wool to France,<sup>1</sup> of the criminality to which they led, and the calculations made that it was more profitable to lose a proportion by seizure in transit and get a large price for the remainder than give the entire to their sole English purchasers at their own modest valuation. So long back as 1699 this restriction extended both to wool and the manufactures into which wool entered; only from six ports in Ireland were such allowed to be shipped, and to no other than certain towns in England.<sup>2</sup> Belfast was not one of the six ports possessed of this privilege; so far from it, that to foster English trade "two ships of the fifth rate, two of the sixth rate, and eight armed sloops were constantly to cruise on the coast of England and Ireland, particularly between the north of Ireland and Scotland, with orders to take and seize all ships, vessels, and boats which shall export any wool with intent to carry it into foreign parts."<sup>3</sup> The same prohibition extended to glass made in Ireland.

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<sup>1</sup> Arthur Young's *Tour in Ireland* (1780) may be consulted on this subject. The whole course of Irish trade and its general oppressive character, from the time of Charles II. and earlier, however, is perhaps nowhere more clearly explained than in that large and minute work published in 1837 under the auspices of the Ordnance Board, called *Memoir of the City and North Western Liberties of Londonderry*. It was compiled by several learned and most painstaking writers working in union, and it is a pity that other localities, at the instance of the Government, were not done in the same most efficient manner.

<sup>2</sup> See *Collection of Several Acts and Statutes Relating to the Revenue of Ireland*, Dublin, 1702, p. 204.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 213.

Wool and glass might be manufactured for home use, but could not be sent to foreign parts.

Such is a popular account of Irish trade in the eighteenth century, and the obstructions with which it had to contend. The continental trade was open for Belfast linens and provisions, but even these two, the main productions here at the time, were often embarrassed by restrictions and embargoes, when it was imagined that English interests, either those of the State or particular commercial departments, were endangered. Yet the boon of 1780 may at once have had some effect, as in 1783 the port duties of the town amounted to £73,000, while only a very few years previously they had been but £60,000.<sup>1</sup>

The political situation with which the Volunteers had to deal

<sup>1</sup> *Joy's MSS.*

The question of the port duties is an important one, and has been referred to several times in previous parts of this work as the index of the real state of the trade of the town. Whether the increase here mentioned, paltry as it is, was caused in three or four years by the relaxation of the trade laws may be open to some doubt. The statement, however, is put on record, as there is at least a possibility of such being the fact.

The amount of the customs of Belfast for a few years at lengthened intervals is collected in this place so as to be convenient for reference. It does not encroach beyond the year 1800, and only in three cases can be said to be derived from indisputable official sources.

1691	£6,414	17	11	( <i>ante</i> , p. 325.)
1715	9,755	10	8	( <i>ante</i> , p. 327.)
1778	60,000	0	0	} ( <i>Joy's MSS.</i> )
1783	73,000	0	0	
1784	74,472	19	8	
1800	62,000	0	0	

If this last be correct, it can only be accounted for by the poverty and distress consequent on two successive bad seasons and political causes, as the Customs Revenue of the town soon after rose with great rapidity. The Revenue of 1784 is given in full, extracted from the books in the Record Office, Dublin, where they are now deposited. The copy, as here written, which contains the particulars, was kindly taken by W. M. Hennessey, Esq., of the Record Office.

“Belfast Port & } The Account of George Macartney Portis, Esq., Collector of his  
District. } Majesty's Revenue, for one year ended at Lady Day, 1784.

To Cash due to Balance the Account ended at Lady Day, 1783	£1,267	7	0½
To Arrears then standing uncollected on said Account	...	...	111 0 3
Carry Forward	...	...	£1,378 7 3½

was equally objectionable, and has, as every one knows, long since been overturned. One of the many productions<sup>1</sup> of that day, in describing, or making out a list rather, of the Parliamentary life of the Irish boroughs, thus truthfully and in a few words describes the political condition of our town—"Belfast, 15,000 inhabitants. The electors consist of a Sovereign and Twelve Burgesses, Five of whom only are resident—The Earl of Donegall Patron." So were they all. About ninety persons appointed the majority of the Irish Parliament; considerations were given for the high office, and, as a well-known result, considerations equally substantial were received. Corruption and venality prevailed on all sides, and the Volunteers were but acting justly and patriotically in lending their aid to introduce a purer system both in commerce and politics. One link of the commercial chain was severed by their undaunted conduct, aided by the progress of the American War, but political links were of greater tenacity. It was feared now that without an entirely inde-

	Brought over	...	...	...	...	£1,378	7	3½
To one year's produce ended at Lady Day, 1784.	Customs Inwards and Surcharges	£17,947	2	8				
	Do. Outwards	...	...	789	10	4		
	Imported Excise	...	...	6,893	4	10		
	Additional Duties	...	...	750	9	6		
	Storage	...	...	28	14	1		
	Light Money	...	...	30	8	7		
	Fines & Seizures	...	...	458	13	2½		
	Green Tea	..	...	2,208	3	0		
	Bohea Tea	...	...	3,607	10	8		
	Tea exceeding 4s. per lb. weight			401	2	11		
	Consolidated duty on Tobacco			23,310	19	3		
	Ditto on Wine	...	...	3,735	14	0		
	Ditto on Raw Sugar			12,576	19	9		
	Ditto on Refined do.			37	7	10		
	Ditto on Ale	...	...	44	6	7		
	Prizage	...	...	160	0	0		
							72,980	6 9½
To one year's Quit, &c., Rents, ended at Mich., 1783						...	77	6 3
To equalizing duty on British Plantation goods in Lady Day quarter,						...		
1784						...	36	19 4
Total of the Charge						...	£74,472	19 8

<sup>1</sup> *History of the Proceedings and Debates of the Volunteer Delegates on the subject of Parliamentary Reform.*



pendent Parliament the abolition of trade restrictions might be after all but illusory, and their extinction not on an undoubted basis. An interference on the part of the English Privy Council was deemed at variance with the commercial emancipation recently obtained, and all efforts were therefore soon turned to an Irish Parliament free from English control. It is well known how they succeeded; how the great Volunteer Convention of Dungannon in 1782, and the equally great assemblage in Dublin in 1783, led to the famous measure which Irish orators and politicians so ardently sought. The Independence of the Irish Parliament was gained, and in that great event it is only necessary to say that the Belfast Volunteers fully participated, and in all the measures which consummated its birth. It did not realise all their hopes; corruption, rivalry, suspicion, jealousy, were not extinguished; peace and union were still afar off; perfection was not to be acquired in a day or in a year; in truth, it seemed that work for several years was before the country, and our town army, being in all the vigour of youth, and always in the front, were resolved, with the lever they had now got, to continue their endeavours to complete the national regeneration. The proceedings for some subsequent years, the objects contended for, or rather what the town almost universally through their name and influence declared indispensable for the nation's progress, form a subject of vast magnitude. They may be all pretty well known to those who care to seek for them,<sup>1</sup> not many

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<sup>1</sup> Readers desirous of knowing minutely the political history of Belfast in the last quarter of the eighteenth century will find most ample details to gratify them in the volume called *Belfast Politics*, originally published by Mr. Joy, and afterwards by Mr. Lawless in 1818; and in the work called *Historical Recollections Relative to the Town of Belfast*, published in 1817, and also compiled, it has been generally believed, by Mr. Joy. The latter is a valuable work, and is now a scarce one. About four-fifths of it are taken up, from 1760 till the Union, with purely political matter, with authentic details of the Volunteers, chiefly from the newspapers of the time; the public meetings in Belfast in full detail, and all the political movements till the end of the century; and most copious lists of those who participated in the public acts of the town, many of them, by name at least, still well remembered, and brought occasionally under notice in newspaper articles of this day. The present work, it is hoped, will be seen to have had from the first an entirely different aim.



perhaps in number in this more practical age, so that some original local points will only be necessary on the action of the Volunteers of this town.

The Belfast Association maintained the supremacy which they had acquired, perhaps it may be said with propriety, as the head of the Volunteers. When their brethren from the country poured into the town to hold their annual reviews, all doors were open to receive them, all voices to unite in their praise. Even the Charitable Society, then a young institution, sheltered them within its walls during the continuance of the reviews, and they paraded in its grounds preparatory to the grand display on a more spacious arena. The reviews took place on the Plains and in the Falls Meadows, willingly granted by the owners for that purpose. They were open and clear for sight-seeing, and for all the evolutions which the most extreme zeal and desire after military knowledge had called into existence. The accounts preserved of the greetings, assemblies, balls, and general rejoicings accompanying the reviews, as coming from home sources, might be thought exaggerative, but here is one from a casual visitor which, if the sober truth, rivals any that ever proceeded from a native pen. His language is—

“My arrival in Belfast was about ten days before a Provincial Review, which, hurried as I was, I determined to see, and would not for half the profits of my circuit that I had not seen. Of the particulars I cannot now proceed to give an account farther than that all was magnificent, regular, and peaceful beyond description. The Review and the Sham Invasion took up three days; and the number reviewed was such that three thousand five hundred men were employed in keeping the lines each day of the Review. The spectators during the first and second days were computed at 60,000 or 70,000, and on the third not less than 100,000. Every house, public and private, was full of guests; some merchants entertained a whole company with its officers. I never saw meat and drink in such profusion, yet during three days and four nights I did not hear of an individual being drunk or disorderly, except a Lord and two blackguard sailors.”

This was the mock combat accompanying the review of 1781, and this the year when the traveller, who waited ten days



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# A PLAN of the ATTACK and DEFENCE of the TOWN of BELFAST, by the VOLUNTEERS, on the 20th July, 1781.

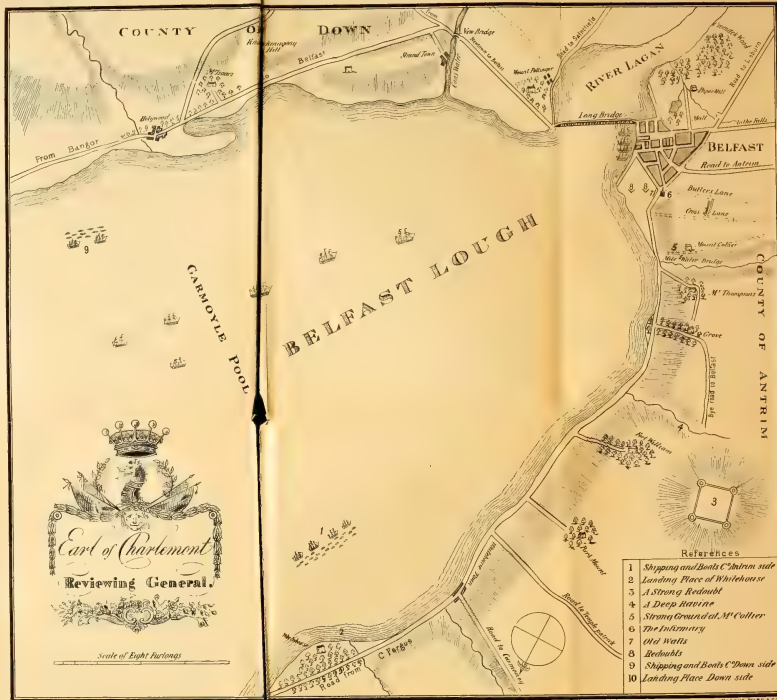
As given out with the Approbation of the EARL of CHARLEMONT, REVIEWING GENERAL.—By MAJOR FRANCIS DOBBS, EXERCISING OFFICER.

## ORDERS.

ON the 20th of July, 1781, Lord Glenswilly's battalion, and the battalion consisting of the Newry Fusiliers, Donaghmore, Kiltand, and Loughbrickland Loyalists, will, at seven o'clock in the morning, without beat of drum, march under the command of Lord Glenswilly, half a mile beyond the White-House, to the Carrickfergus road, and there halt, in a convenient place, where they may be concealed. At the same hour, Colonel Ward will march his battalion and the Kiltagee company half a mile beyond the landing place, on the county of Down side, and halt as far as to be concealed.

At half-past seven, Colonel Stewart will march his regiment, together with the battalion of the first Newry, Rathfriland, Loughbrickland and Sheepbridge companies, and the first Newry Artillery, with their field-pieces, to its landing place, on the county Down side, and will there embark in boats provided for them, when they will go along side, but not on board the shipping (No. 9.)—At the same hour with Colonel Stewart, Colonel O'Neill will march with his own regiment and artillery, the battalion commanded by Colonel Knox, and the battalion of the Ballynary, Ballynary, Donaghmore and Carrickfergus companies, to the landing place on the Antrim side, and will there embark, and go along side the shipping (No. 1) in like manner as Colonel Stewart.—Neither Colonel Stewart nor Colonel O'Neill to beat their drums, till they have reloaded.—At half past eight, intelligence will arrive at Belfast of an enemy preparing to land, on both shores, when the drums will beat to arms.—The Newry and Belfast horse will reconnoitre on the Down shore, and Colonel O'Neill's troop on the county of Antrim side. Colonel Browlow, with his own battalion, the Belfast battalion, the battalion of the Lambeg, Lisburn True Blues, Ballyestown and Lisburn Fusiliers, and the battalion of Killybegs, Donaghmore, Drumbridge, and Purdybarn, together with the Belfast artillery company, and their field-pieces, will march down the county of Antrim side, to oppose the landing, and prevent the enemy's approach. Colonel Dawson, with his battalion, will, at the same time with Colonel Browlow, march from Belfast to oppose the enemy on the Down shore, and will take with him the second Newry artillery company with their two field-pieces, Lord Charlemont's artillery company, and their two field-pieces, will remain in Belfast; each redoubt, (marked No. 6,) to have one of the field-pieces placed in it.

As soon as Colonel Browlow with the body under his command, have got near to the White-House, the shipping (at No. 1) will begin their fire, and Colonel O'Neill, with the body under his command, will proceed to shore. Colonel Browlow will make the necessary disposition, and fire with his artillery and small arms on the men in the boats, till they have regained the shore, when he will retreat in good



### ASSAILANTS

Colonel Stewart's Regiment	No. 598
Colonel O'Neill's Regiment	352
Colonel Knox's Battalion, with the Lisburn, Rosevale and Aghalee Companies	334
Battalion of Ballynary, Ballynary, Donaghmore and Carrickfergus Companies	320
Battalion of 1st Newry, Rathfriland, Loughbrickland, and Sheepbridge	316
Newry, 1st Artillery Company, with two brass six-pounders	42
Colonel O'Neill's Company	42
<b>Total of Assaultants</b>	<b>2339</b>

### BELFAST GARRISON.

Newry Troop	No. 36
Colonel O'Neill's Troop	33
Best Troop	32
<b>Total Horse</b>	<b>101</b>

### ARTILLERY.

Field-pieces, six brass six-pounders	No. 34
1st Artillery Company	34
Newry, second Detto	34
Lord Charlemont's Detto	34
<b>Total Artillery</b>	<b>100</b>

### FOOT.

Belfast Battalion and Carrickmore Company	No. 315
Colonel Dawson's Battalion of Lord Charlemont's Regiment	324
Colonel Browlow's Battalion of 10th	475
Battalion of Lambeg, Lisburn True Blues, Ballynary, Lisburn Fusiliers	399
Battalion of Killybegs, Donaghmore, Drumbridge, and Purdybarn	269
<b>Total Foot</b>	<b>1938</b>
<b>Total in Garrison</b>	<b>2739</b>

### FRIENDS who march to the Assistance of BELFAST.

Lord Glenswilly's Battalion	No. 352
Colonel Ward's Battalion, and the Kiltagee Company	379
Battalion of Newry Fusiliers, Donaghmore, Kiltand, and Loughbrickland Loyalists	299
<b>Total in Aid of Belfast,</b>	<b>903</b>
<b>Total of Horse at Review</b>	<b>101</b>
<b>Total of Artillery men</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total of Foot</b>	<b>1938</b>
<b>To be reviewed in all</b>	<b>5381</b>
<b>Field-pieces, brass six-pounders</b>	<b>10</b>



for it, beheld the inspiring scene. Not the fictitious engagements of this day, with so much greater resources than those which could be commanded by the Volunteers, are conducted with greater regularity and success than the mimic combats of the armed citizens of the last century. A foreign enemy was supposed to be approaching the town; troops were put in motion on each side of the Lough to watch them; reconnoitring and manœuvring took place with wonderful precision; there was a permitted success of the supposed enemy, who had effected a landing; military skill was shown to draw on the invaders; a decisive action near the Poorhouse was the object; the appointments, the evolutions, the cannons are described, and thousands of men in all the panoply of war are stated to have entered on the friendly strife. But are not these things already written in the newspaper of the day; and more valuable still, are not the ground, the positions, the topographical features, all depicted on the map herewith adjoined?<sup>1</sup> It is a very interesting map, and well worth preserving as a memorial of volunteer days. The rank of those who were commanders of the Volunteers is here seen. Lord Charlemont was present, and was the guest of Dr. Haliday, as he was on all other occasions when his duty as Reviewing General brought him to the town.

In the year 1783 the Earl of Donegall paid one of his periodical visits to Belfast, where he appears to have remained for some time. He was as enthusiastic as any in praise of the Volunteers, and reviewed the body, on which occasion the following address was presented to him:—

“To the Earl of Donegall.

“MY LORD,

“The Corps this day reviewed by your Lordship, beg leave through us their Delegates to return you their warmest thanks for the honour you have conferred upon them; and to assure your Lordship they felt every gratification from your presence that

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<sup>1</sup> The original of the map copied here belongs to William Bruce Joy, Esq., of London.



men could receive in beholding a nobleman whose character is so strongly marked by public spirit.

"Amid the crowd of landlords, who, living in another kingdom draw immense revenues from this exhausted country without contributing to any public work as compensation for the injury, we feel the highest satisfaction in giving to your Lordship the due tribute of our praise, and our warmest welcome and congratulations on your Lordship's arrival among us.

"May you, my Lord, very long enjoy every honour and acknowledgment so justly due to your Lordship's munificence and consideration of the interests of your country.

"Signed by Order,

"HERCULES ROWLEY, Chairman.

"BELFAST, 9th June, 1783."

To which his Lordship was pleased to return the following reply:—

"GENTLEMEN,

"Words can but feebly express my feelings on this occasion or convey an adequate idea of the satisfaction I received on reviewing the Volunteer Corps you represent, whose military appearance and manœuvres would have done honour to veterans. The approbation given by so respectable a part of the community to my endeavours to facilitate and promote the internal commerce of this part of the kingdom is highly flattering to me. My exertions, and I trust those of others who by their possessions in this country are interested in its welfare, will never be wanting towards obtaining those advantages which the emancipation of its trade and peace have brought within its reach: I am persuaded by a proper attention to the improvement of its manufactures and the cultivation of its lands (which now ought to be our chief object) this kingdom will daily increase in wealth, splendour, and consequence."

When the above address was made, and the answer returned, there is no doubt the speakers and listeners were clothed in the Volunteer garb. They are formal and ceremonious, not suited for every-day occasions. Now let us see the same Lord Donegall in undress, as depicted in one of the characteristic letters of Dr. Haliday to Lord Charlemont at the same time. Dr. Haliday was the constant correspondent of Lord Charlemont, keeping

him apprised of all the movements in progress in the town. A letter of that class affords a glimpse of society and manners at this eventful era. Dr. Halliday asks Lord Charlemont—

“Is your Lordship on any footing of acquaintanceship with our Lord Paramount? He figures here in the character of Colonel of the Belfast Battalion, whose drums and fifes rattle and squeak from his portals every morning. Would it be improper or ineligible to solicit his dining with the General? I suspect indeed it would be in vain. In matters of meats and drink he thinks it more blessed to give than to receive. Fines and rents are of a different family, a much younger one it is true, yet more respected. . . . On Thursday night he exhibited a *magnifique* museum at the Rooms. Three hundred and sixty Vassals and Vassalesses all alive<sup>1</sup> . . . were present. He led us off at midnight to sup in Seven Rooms at the Inn. It was a night quiet and pleasant, though but a half dressed sort of thing, very few of the Money-Begums wearing Jewels. What Idiots were those Vagabonds to troop off that very morning?<sup>2</sup> They would have seen more viands I do suppose on those seven tables than in the whole kingdom of Scotland. Indeed even the English squad confessed they could not have had such a Supper out of London.

“His Lordship is exceedingly pleased with the Town and his Navigation, and we are all pleased with him; he certainly is a courteous and well disposed nobleman.”

This is an odd story. The “Rooms” here mentioned were either in the Exchange or the apartments in the Market House—most probably the former; and if so, it was a remarkable trait of manners for “360 vassals and vassalesses” to be trooping through Bridge Street and High Street in the middle of the night headed by Lord Donegall, even if the atmosphere were “quiet and pleasant.” Dr. Haliday seems to have partaken of the opinion entertained by some at that day of Lord Donegall’s conduct in regard to “Fines and Rents,” no other meaning being capable of being drawn from the sentence in which these words

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<sup>1</sup> In other words, the ladies and gentlemen of Belfast of 1783.

<sup>2</sup> A playful allusion by Dr. Haliday to some intimate friends who had gone to Scotland in the morning.

occur. He cannot avoid, however, paying a tribute to the character and munificence of the Earl of Donegall.<sup>1</sup>

In 1783 the great Volunteer Convention was held in Dublin, and the name of Belfast is very gravely identified with the event. The Volunteers of this town directed their delegates to insist on the admission of Roman Catholics to all the rights of other subjects, and, to add emphasis to the recommendation, biography informs us "that it is now well known that there was at that moment in full equipment at Belfast a train of artillery with a considerable supply of ammunition and a large corps of Volunteers ready to march to the aid of the Convention if necessary."<sup>2</sup> It is certain that the language of the delegates was bold and undisguised, and such as might be fairly presumed to proceed from a party representing 150,000 armed Volunteers. The sentiments of this great body were very loudly pronounced on the political requirements of the day. They called for a most extended measure of Parliamentary reform, for more clear and defined trade laws, for unconditional and immediate emancipa-

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<sup>1</sup> This is the obituary notice of this Earl or first Marquis of Donegall:—"In every part of an extensive landed property it is acknowledged that his Lordship was the kindest and most indulgent Landlord. Though an absentee from this country he evinced his attachment to it by a liberal expenditure of large sums for the advantage of the community. In the course of a few years he laid out above £60,000 in the Lagan Navigation and the Public Buildings in this town, which were erected at his sole expense, since he inherited the honours and estates of his ancestors, and which remain as monuments of his public spirit and generosity."—*News-Letter*, January, 1799. It will not be forgotten this was the Earl of Hearts of Steel notoriety.

How far does the above correspond with the following:—"About 150 workmen by order of Lord Donegall demolished an embankment at the east end of the Long Bridge which had been made by order of Lord Chief Baron Yelverton for the purpose of erecting a Town there, but Lord Donegall claimed the ground as a Royalty." This was more fully noticed in the House of Commons on 20th February, 1787, when the Attorney-General stated "that an outrage had been committed on the property of Chief Baron Yelverton at Belfast, by which his embankment at the Long Bridge was demolished by 400 men headed by an engineer employed by a certain absentee nobleman who perhaps has injured his country more than any man ever did. The chief offender availing himself of privilege refuses to plead."—*Commons Journals*, 1786.

The property in dispute was soon after bought by Lord Donegall.

<sup>2</sup> Moore's *Life of Lord Edward Fitzgerald*, vol i., p. 189.

tion of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects from all civil disabilities. As a proof of liberality and desire for union the Belfast First Volunteer Company agreed to march to Mass on Sunday, 30th May, 1784. They accordingly proceeded on that day in full dress uniform to St. Mary's in Chapel Lane, then the only Catholic Church in Belfast, on which occasion a sermon was delivered by the Rev. Mr. O'Donnell, that broad church man who is said to have proposed as a toast at one of the great political banquets of the day, "Religion without Priestcraft." The sum of £84 was collected for the benefit of the congregation. This was a Presbyterian demonstration chiefly, and the same occurred among the Volunteer bodies in some country places. Belfast at the time had its detractors. It was vituperated now and in some subsequent years for its bold and outspoken tendencies. One member of Parliament described it as a nest of traitors and rebels; another as a community whom no king could govern nor no God could please. Other persons, surely with more truth and justice, and undoubtedly in less intemperate and objectionable words, averred that all Ireland took its tone from the spirited, independent, and just-thinking Volunteers and inhabitants of Belfast; another said that "the politics of this town for forty years were the politics of Ireland;" a Belfast man,<sup>1</sup> not yet forgotten, pronounces "the foundation of Ireland's freedom to have been laid here by a few master spirits, and although they now rest in death their memory can neither die nor be run down." Another, still more unmeasured in his eulogies, calls Belfast "a city renowned over the kingdom and over England for its thorough knowledge of, and ardent attachment to, Constitutional Liberty;" and that from it as "from a fountain head the torrent of public spirit burst forth and overspread the land."<sup>2</sup>

But the introduction of some extracts from the letters of Dr. Drennan will better illustrate the history of the period than any

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<sup>1</sup> James Hope.

<sup>2</sup> From introduction to *Address to the Constitutional Electors and Free People of Ireland*.

diluted version. The letters are about eighty in number, and, with the exception of one or two, are addressed to the writer's intimate friend Dr. Bruce when resident in Dublin. They commence in the year 1782 and close about 1789, and are, all but a few at the beginning and at the end, written from Newry. A great number are chiefly taken up with family and professional history not adapted for notice. Many names of Belfast people and others are brought before us in that easy epistolary style so attractive when compared with the stiff details of newspaper columns, but the only parts suitable to the present purpose are the political proceedings with which Dr. Drennan was as well acquainted, and in which he took as deep an interest, as any man of the time. It is needless to say that he participated in all the enthusiasm of 1782, and enforced his views with that uncompromising firmness and strength of language which distinguish his writings. They are the sentiments of one fully alive to the events which were in progress. The letters are all unpublished and original, and should be received with respect and favour by the reader. It is only to be regretted that the merest fragments can be copied.<sup>1</sup> Dr. Drennan first says of the great Dungannon Convention—"The Meeting at Dungannon has been a glorious one—temperate words and patriotic meaning." Soon after he writes thus—

"The short and crowded story of Volunteering is now nearly finished—at least the most interesting and eventful portion of it. It is perhaps at present too close for us to enjoy its real beauty, and to determine its exact proportions. It presses upon the eye. Would it be worth while to hold it, as it were, at a greater distance and view it under the less glaring light that may be thrown over it by the Historian? I am sure it would be a *pretium operæ* to enjoy even by a historical Fiction the Praises, the impartial Judgment of Posterity—to anticipate the judgment, or at least by an impartial but not unimpassioned account of the origin, progress, and final triumph of Volunteers, to lay before Posterity those authentic documents which we may rest upon as our plea for immortality. . . . Do you think there is sufficient matter since '78 . . . to make a narration, circumstantial

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<sup>1</sup> These letters were kindly lent to me by the present Dr. Drennan of Belfast, son of the eminent writer.



without being triflingly minute, founded on authentic materials, and liberal in remarks on the original defects, subsequent improvements or mistakes, improvements which sometimes ended in abuses and mistakes which not only terminated in reformation, but in the most unexpected Benefits and the greatest national Blessings? Do you think there is Story enough, for there should always be Subserviency in quantity of Reflection to the groundwork of Fact? The richer the Stuff, the embroidery may be more slight. Are the necessary materials procurable by an obscure Individual? . . . and might not time and industry with the co-operation of ingenious and well informed friends help the author in raising the superstructure?"

The letter contains much more to the same effect, and would imply that Dr. Drennan thought of writing the history of the Volunteers while still fresh to the world. In it he says—"Grattan's estate should be purchased in Ulster, and as near Belfast as possible, the Metropolis of Volunteers."

In another letter of 1782 there is much abstract reasoning as to the difference between the words *renunciation* and *repeal*. The dispute, apparently verbal, caused some warm discussion. It gives occasion for a local note. The debate was to be "in Bryson's Meeting House—Admittance, to those not represented, 2s. 8½d. for the Benefit of the Poor House." They were obliged, however, to adjourn to the Exchange, "where was formed something like a military Parliament. The Light Infantry kept constant Guard at the Door and the Lower Gates."

These little dissensions, arising, perhaps, from the great success of the Association and the power which they had acquired, were often more or less occurring. It is both unnecessary and impossible to relate them here. All parties really aimed at the same great object, but differences in details unavoidably arose in its pursuit. Mr. Dobbs, for one, was unpopular with the outside politicians. After a meeting in Belfast, in which he and Dr. Drennan expressed conflicting opinions, the latter writes—"The minority in a paroxysm of rage and disappointment rushed to the New Inn. I knew Dobbs was at the Inn unprotected and in danger of insult. Several of us ran over and remained with him till 11 o'clock." This slight scar on the Volunteer escutcheon



appears to have arisen from a debate as to the expediency of suspending recruiting, on account of a promise made by the Government which some thought a valuable concession, others totally illusory.

Dr. Drennan wrote after one of these ruffles to his friend—

“If you mean to make a sortie to our Review don’t tell me, for there is nothing I like more than the agreeable surprise one feels in meeting unexpectedly a dear friend. Evans is arrived here Quarter Master General to the general disgust of Banks’s Company. You may guess the reason. Dobbs also with M’Bride’s Cockades—foolish again.”

“February 15th, 1783. They are petitioning Lord Donegall in Belfast to appoint W. Conyngham representative of their Commercial Town. This has been long a scheme of Bryson’s, and I hear the Petition is signed by a number of the respectable Laity in the Place. I think it is not improbable that Donegall will satisfy their importunity and give a Log for their croaking.”

The Patron did not respond to the application of a portion of the inhabitants, for on February, 1784, Waddell Cunningham and Mr. Hewit had a contested election in Carrickfergus, when the former was returned. The Patron, apparently displeased at the presumption of his subjects, immediately returned Mr. Hewit as member for Belfast. The Volunteers wished to have freedom of election by the empty process of praying for it to an individual; but the “Lord Paramount” was as yet too strong for them, and rejected their interference.

“1784. Haliday has renewed his annual invitation to Lord Charlemont.”

“March, 1785. I was in Belfast lately for a day and among all the friends of Reform of all churches. Zeal is entirely sunk to the lower classes, and Reform is now, and that I believe but seldom, the topic of conversation in any genteel society.”

Had it really come to this in the “Metropolis of the Volunteers”? Perhaps the writer was a little cynical, or perhaps his own unwavering integrity and resolution were not found so fresh and warm among others as they had been in past years. Here is another passage from a letter in the same year, which is as unlike

our conceptions of Dr. Drennan as it can well be. It is but a sally, not meant for a stern and true picture, but at least it gives us an idea about what might have been with some in the last century, when surrounded by the incessant excitements of the time :—

“May, 1785. Mrs. Siddons arrived 10th June. I will accompany you to Belfast. We will have a night of eating, drinking, and talking with Joy and Kilburne, that Epicurean cynic. . . . We will see Haliday and hear him repeat his Ode with verse that harrows the ear, and yet pleases the understanding—Buntin, the Falstaff of the north, —Honest Mattear. This you will call my way of painting. Do come—tell me the day.”

The writer had now taken some umbrage at the Volunteers. In August, 1785, he says he had been “twice in Belfast lately—once to see Mrs. Siddons, and another time to see the Review—to see the buried Majesty of the People arise and cross the stage for the last time. The ghost of Volunteering was drest in its habit as it lived, and shook in vain its visionary sword.” This is somewhat in the theatrical vein. Did not the Volunteers of Belfast still preserve their uniform untarnished? The letter continues in the same way lamenting the decay of the early Volunteer spirit, concluding with this character of their commander—“I do not like Lord Charlemont. . . . He is not a man of nerve. I like Rowan better—he has somewhat of the Long Parliament in his countenance, some of the Republican ferocity.”

The letter No. 43 contains some fine passages. It is without date, as many of them are. The lost vigour of Volunteering was still, in his estimation, his master grievance. He writes—

“The thunders and lightnings of Dungannon have ceased. The Volunteers of Ireland by their Club *Law* (?) were not able to accomplish what it seems a Club of little gentlemen have hopes to accomplish by wearing a suit of blue, with blue velvet cuffs and capes and a gilt button with the motto Persevere. I should make another sort of motto—mine should be Constitution, Revolution, or Dissolution. A Reform Club was such a manœuvre as might be expected about

seven or eight years ago at the beginning of the business. . . . This Club is I think hostile to Volunteering, and perhaps the enemies of the latter, or what is as bad, the timid friends, will favour this measure on that account."

The allusion here was to the Whig Club then in embryo in Belfast, which many of his best friends favoured, but which he utterly rejected. In a rather sad or bitter tone he continues—

"The Irish Hercules is set down to a distaff. He holds it; and Mrs. Charlemont, Miss Edgeworth, and Miss Bruce, pretty damsels, like Clotho, Atropos, and Lachesis, sit to a spinning the thread of Irish destiny."<sup>1</sup>

"You bid me send my name to be inserted in the Club. My Name is William Drennan. But don't think I will put myself to the expence of a suit for this purpose if that be a *sine qua non*. For my own part I am more eager than ever in the reform business. I wrote a letter to Harry Joy which I gave him leave to publish in extract—if he dare. . . . I can't find men that would form a serious Association—a sacred compact about the matter. I would sign such a Confederation of Compatriots with my Blood. Oh! I think I see Marcus Cato looking down from Heaven, and austere smiling while he calls us prattlers—mere prattlers. When you write to Edgeworth give him my compliments, and ask him when he heard from his friend Tippoo Saib. . . . You will find few who venture more than words about a subject, which, in the course of debate and after dinner conversation you would suppose the next to their hearts."

Letter No. 70 is of great length. It is without date or town address, but written when Dr. Drennan was resident in Dublin. It is directed to Dr. Bruce in Belfast, which almost verifies its date. It refers to some historical facts of the age, and is so far a confirmation of them on indisputable contemporary evidence. He says—

"The Coalition of the Protestants and Catholics has taken place, at least in part, under the auspices of Tandy, and several of the Patriotic Citizens in his party. Eighteen of them met on Wednesday and I happened to be of the number. . . . They called themselves the Society of United Irishmen of Dublin, and adopted *verbatim* the Declaration of the similar Society in Belfast."

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<sup>1</sup> Lord Charlemont, Richard Lovell Edgeworth, and Dr. Bruce.

This letter takes broad views of both Church and State. The gradual emancipation of Catholics is reasoned against from several points of view, ending with this illustration—"Now that word *gradual* is very indefinite, and so much at the disposal of the dominant party that I fancy it is only a pretext, a delusive and unmeaning word, that means ten thousand years as well as ten."

No farther extracts from the letters of Dr. Drennan are possible in this confined space. To be valued as they should be, or fully understood, a knowledge of the entire would be requisite.

The Revolution of 1782, as it has been sometimes styled, which gave Ireland an independent Parliament, was not a final measure—indeed the farthest from it possible. The powers and privileges required by the Belfast politicians would appear to us now reasonable and just, but public opinion was not then sufficiently advanced to cause them to be received with general unanimity. The French Revolution of 1789, which set Europe in a blaze, excited as high hopes and was as enthusiastically applauded here as in any part of the empire. It confirmed the leading politicians in the justice of their own pretensions, and that their time was to follow in a like course of freedom. None here, as well as elsewhere, could see clearly at first what the result of the French Revolution was to be, and, considering the position which this town had acquired as the advanced guard in Ireland of political progress, it was scarcely possible that anything but approbation should arise, and a feeling that the whole world was about to witness a regeneration to which no limit could be seen.

Opinions soon began to be expressed that grated on the ears of some of the more moderate politicians, and as a counterpoise the Northern Whig Club was originated in 1790 in Belfast by Dr. Haliday and others of property and influence and of kindred sentiments, their action therein being approved of and participated in by the noble Earl who had led the Volunteers, and whose name is for ever associated with them. There was a difference of opinion between this club and the principal political characters of the town on some measures, notably on Catholic

Emancipation—whether it should be gradual, or full and immediate. Dr. Drennan's opinion on that question has been already told in his own words. They varied also a little on other points, but not apparently to such extent as to create disunion, when subjects were discussed in which all concurred.

The Volunteers had by this time come to be looked on with suspicion and dislike by the Government. Their early services were forgotten; and the growing sentiments of many in Belfast, both within and without the ranks, savoured too much of a desire to take the matter of government into their own hands. They had lost some of the freshness of their early years, and some at least were becoming tinged, it is not to be doubted, with the democratic opinions which the supposed disappointment in the ready attainment of their objects at home, and the extraordinary progress of the French Revolution abroad, had engendered. It has been stated that the Volunteers glided into the United Irishmen, and that the latter could never have risen into such proportions as they eventually did without the preparatory measures which volunteering, with its military organisation and its spirit of inquiry, created. The United Irishmen, who took their first rise in Belfast, as the Volunteers had done before them, did not deny or conceal the name they desired to bear, or disavow the objects which they had in view. Their original scheme was "Parliamentary Reform, a brotherhood of affection, an identity of interest, a communion of rights, and a Union of power among Irishmen of ALL religious persuasions." These alone were on their standard—these were the ostensible privileges to which they aspired; but it is commonly believed that the leaders had, if not from the very first, at least early in their confederacy, a fixed intention to effect a separation of Ireland from England with French assistance, and its establishment as an independent kingdom. This would have been an impracticable project, as the leaders of the United Irishmen found when they proceeded to perfect their system. The Belfast Volunteers might march to Mass in the town with the best intentions, but in other localities the Peep of Day Boys,



as the Protestants were called, and the Catholics, who were known by the name of Defenders, could not lay aside their dissensions for benefits too distant or problematical for them to understand or value. These results, however, were not yet fully felt, and accordingly, or without apprehension of their seriousness, the United Irishmen were inaugurated in Belfast in the year 1791.

Many individuals of influence and standing in society took an interest in the project, indeed identified themselves with the United Irishmen at their initiation in Belfast, but it is only necessary to mention here four persons whose names were conspicuous from first to last, as more or less connected with the town, and all unswerving in their efforts to compass the great design. These were Samuel Neilson, Henry Joy M'Cracken, Theobald Wolfe Tone, and Thomas Russell. The first two were Belfast men, both in trade and of great respectability, and both might have ended their days in peace and opulence if not so sensitively affected by what they believed—what nearly all believed—was faulty and unjust legislation. The other two men, Tone and Russell, were strangers to the town, but possessed of talent and sincerity of purpose, and the former occupying the position of founder of the United Irishmen. They proclaimed Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation, it has been seen, as their grand leading principles; but “it clearly appears from the letter of Theobald Wolfe Tone accompanying their original constitution, as transmitted to Belfast for adoption, that from its commencement the real purpose of those who were at the head of the institution was to separate Ireland from Great Britain.” This is the delivery of the Secret Committee of the House of Commons when tracing at a somewhat later period the history of the United Irishmen back to their origin. Tone did not send a letter only. He came to Belfast to constitute the society, believing the field to be the most ripe of any in Ireland for such a purpose. He had already made himself known by a very able address, still to be met with among the numberless pamphlets of those days, called “An



Argument on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland," and which created an extraordinary sensation. In consequence of it "he was invited to Belfast," as high authority affirms, "by the Volunteers of that town, where he proceeded, in company with Russell, and in conjunction with Neilson and other friends, to found the first club which took the name of the Society of United Irishmen."<sup>1</sup> Tone in his Diary is not so explicit, simply stating that he went down to Belfast in October, 1791; he does not say by formal invitation of the Volunteers, but by that of a secret committee of a society instituted a short time in the town; and there is a probability from this that the Government report which pronounced the league to have had deeper objects than emancipation and reform reported correctly the early situation of affairs.

Thomas Russell had been for some time in Belfast. He was probably at the founding of the Society for Promoting Knowledge in 1788; he was secretary to the body, and his signature in that capacity is still to be seen in its early papers. He had been an officer in the army, had won some distinction in that profession, and for his literary taste, general deportment, and unbounded love of liberty had become a great favourite, and was on terms of the closest intimacy and companionship with some of the most respectable persons in Belfast. So much regard was felt for him that, when it was feared he might entangle himself beyond recovery in dangerous schemes, every effort was made to detach him from the United Irishmen. The somewhat lengthened record of his life is accessible,<sup>2</sup> and is most interesting. The correspondence which it contains between the misguided patriot and John Templeton, much of it on subjects which distinguished the latter as a naturalist; the inquiry which Russell makes when languishing in prison, if the heathery bank at which both had gazed—perhaps on the beauties of the opening spring—were still preserved at Orange Grove; the notices of

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<sup>1</sup> See Madden's *United Irishmen, their Lives and Times*, vol. i., 3rd series, p. 127.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. ii., 3rd series, pp. 137, 203.

Dr. M'Donnell and other influential inhabitants, cannot be read of in connection with Russell without the most absorbing attention, at least by those who remember many named in the narrative still living in the Belfast of fifty years ago. But Tone was the moving spirit, "the celebrated representative of the new movement."<sup>1</sup> He and Russell acted in concert till the latter was imprisoned some considerable time after.

Apart from the meetings and the history of the rapid growth from 1791 of the Society of United Irishmen in their public aspect, a picture is obtained from Tone's Journal of the employments of the two apostles of revolution and their brethren in Belfast in their less serious hours. Fictitious names are adopted, though the motive for such is not obvious. Tone assumed the name of Mr. Hutton; Russell is P.P., or clerk of the parish; Mr. Sinclair is the Draper, Mr. Neilson the Jacobin, and so on with several others. Our own rather unpretending town of Belfast is distinguished by the magniloquent title of The City of Blefescu. Tone visited the Blefescu of his fancy more than once, and out of the diary of his journeys into the country, and residences here, such scraps as the following can readily be picked:—

"Walked all day about the town seeing sights." "Curious discourse with a hair dresser (one Taylor) who has two children christened by the priest though he is himself a Dissenter, merely with a wish to blend the sects." "Went to dinner to meet the Secret Committee." "Walked in the Mall with Digges and P.P.; the ladies, one and all, speer P.P." "Did not get up till one o'clock,—dressed, went in a chaise to Joy's to dine." "Rode out with Sinclair and P.P., to see his Bleach Green,—a noble concern,—extensive machinery—bleaches annually 10,000 pieces of linen." "Walked out, saw the Foundry, the Glass House, &c." "Go out to the Draper at Lilliput—meet Dr. White,—Settle the Address—many alterations—Go at 9 o'clock to meet the Delegates at the Donegall Arms—Fifteen present—"The hair of Dr. Haliday's wig miraculously turns gray with fear of the Catholics—Several comets appear in the Market Place."

Interspersed among such badinage are the notes which point

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<sup>1</sup> Froude's *English in Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 8.

to the real objects of his mission. They are notes full of meaning, but not so attractive as his loose unpremeditated utterances. Of one of the great rejoicings in commemoration of the event which the town so much admired he writes :—

“14th. Era of the French Revolution—knocked up early by Neilson—got on my Regimentals. . . . Drums beating—colours flying and all the honours of war . . . take the word Catholic out, and put in Irishman of every religious denomination. . . . Meeting at the Linen Hall—astonishing full—Carry the question with about Five dissenting, among whom are Joy and Waddell Cunningham.”

Then there is a mingling of such ejaculations as “Huzza, huzza!—generally drunk—Broke my glass thumping the table.” Their patriotism did not restrain their libations; it was the custom of the time in assemblages of more staid character in Blifescu than those in which Mr. Tone led the riot. He was able to continue—“My letter to the *Northern Star* approved of, advocating the cause of the Catholics.” In another visit to the town at a subsequent period he writes—“August 14th. Walk out and see M’Cracken’s new ship the *Hibernia*,” then in the exuberance of his spirits and the plenitude of his hopes indulges again in extravagant language, exclaiming, “The Belfast men get warm with wine and patriotism—all stout—Gog valiant—also the Irish slave; also the Tanner, also Mr. Hutton.”

The preceding are samples of Tone’s Journal in its playful mood. It abounds with allusions to his particular friends in this town. His remarks about some persons at first sight would appear not very respectful, but his light, joyous temperament, leading to expressions and a manner so opposed to what is generally thought to belong to a rebel and incendiary, almost justify the laudation bestowed on him in 1826 by the great orator, Richard Lalor Sheil. The weightier matters which occupied his attention here, his attempts to promote reconciliation and union between Catholics and Presbyterians as necessary for the success of the measures he was so desirous to accomplish, the secret plans, the open interviews with persons of rank in the

County Down with a view to the pacification of the country now restless and disturbed on all sides, the accounts of his journeys to Rathfriland, Ballynahinch, and other places with this hope and intention, are set down in a more business-like temper than the more hilarious gambols which he so fully enjoyed in Blefescu.

In the Journal, Tone alludes to his presence in Belfast at one of the ceremonial rejoicings for the French Revolution. It is quite true. He was at the procession in uniform on the 14th of July, 1791, and the special account of this great day, in which the members of the Northern Whig Club joined with as much fervour as the United Irishmen, must be preserved in this place as a record of the general political feeling of the town in the year of its celebration. There were 6000 Volunteers at this display, as enthusiastic and determined as when Lord Charlemont reviewed the body outside the town ten years before. They had no misgivings, to all appearance, in the goodness of their cause. It was, in truth, specially, a Belfast ovation of the most imposing character.

“At a meeting of the Subscribers to the celebration of the Anniversary of the French Revolution convened by public Notice at the Exchange on Saturday the 9th inst.—Captain Cunningham in the Chair.

“Resolved First Unanimously, That we will wear Irish National Cockades on the 14th inst. (Green).

“Second. That we think it proper to announce for the information of the Friends of the French Revolution in this Town and Neighbourhood that the several Volunteer Corps will draw up on that day in line at the Exchange; their right opposite North Street, their left extending along Waring Street. It is requested that those Societies, Clubs, and individuals which intend to form part of the procession will for greater regularity be pleased to range in pairs on the left of the Volunteers. Colonel Sharman (the president elect) on the right of the line. The whole body will move off in that order at 11 o'clock, and proceed down Bridge Street; along the north side of High Street; the Quays; up the south side of High Street, through Castle Street, Mill Street, Mill Field Street, North Street, pass by the Exchange up the west side of Donegall Street as far as the Academy, down the east side of Donegall Street through Waring Street, Skipper Street, Church Lane,

Ann Street, Shamble Street, along High Street, halting in Linen Hall Street till three rounds be fired by the Battalion companies answered between each of the Artillery, after which the whole will advance as before in regular order into the square of the Linen Hall for the purpose of a public Declaration on the subject of the Glorious Revolution in France.

“Third. That on the present occasion we wish to discourage bonfires and illuminations in order that the whole may be a scene in daylight, and conducted with seriousness, dignity, and decorum corresponding with the magnitude of the event which we wish to celebrate.

“WADDELL CUNNINGHAM, Chairman.”

The processionists passed on this occasion through all the streets of any consequence, and how small the reckoning—so small indeed that they had to retread their steps, wind about as in a labyrinth, show themselves on each side of some of the streets, not to be too early for the great feast which was prepared for their enjoyment at the Linen Hall! The Linen Hall never was the scene of such a spectacle before or since; it was a board of more than ordinary dimensions, at which 354 sat down—a single table, it is said, in the south side of the building; but all the wings rang with the acclamations, the speeches, the toasts, so extreme in expression as to justify the language of a high authority that “Belfast in those years rivalled Paris itself in extravagance.”<sup>1</sup>

The Government were taking heed of these and many other occurrences in the town. The Presbyterian ministers did not escape them. In the Report of the Committee of the House of Lords, 7th March, 1793, they allege that “Prayers have been offered up at Belfast from the Pulpit for the success of the French arms in the presence of military associations which have been newly levied and arrayed in that town.” There were then just five dissenting ministers in Belfast, including Mr. Carmichael, who was a Seceder, all of whom denied by a public declaration that there was any truth in the statement, Sinclair Kelburne alone in a manner somewhat less direct than the others, but still giving a denial sufficiently explicit.

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<sup>1</sup> *The English in Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 18.



The United Irishmen believed that their organisation boded entire and early success. Some time after this, a Secret Society was formed in Dublin by Tone, of persons not less devoted to the revolutionary cause than were their friends in Belfast; more so they could not well have been, as the following extract sufficiently proves. Tone, at one of his visits here, went to the summit of M'Art's Fort on the Cave Hill, accompanied by several of his Belfast associates, and "they took a solemn obligation never to desist in their efforts till they had subverted the authority of England over their country and asserted her independence." Secret conspirators, it is affirmed, affect midnight darkness; but here, in the broad light of day, a thousand feet above the sea level, surrounded by far-stretching prospects of land and water, by romantic and noble scenery, was the "solemn obligation" entered into—at the old historic spot, the gathering-place, the secure retreat of the O'Neills of distant ages.

The friends of France in Belfast—and here to every appearance all were her friends—declared "that in no spot in Europe has the French Revolution been celebrated with more splendour, seriousness, and feeling than in the town of Belfast, if we except the very country where that astonishing event took place." In their latter days the Volunteers were as joyfully received in the town as in their spring-time; "the inhabitants were happy in renewing expressions of affection for them in the fourteenth year since the commencement of reviews, and the *sixteenth* of the Volunteer era." All were in accord, few perhaps suspecting the pitfalls which were in the distance. This was the year when a strong effort was made by the Catholics for their emancipation. Five persons from Dublin, delegated by that body, having taken their route by Belfast to lay the petition before the king, the populace of this town—so strong was the feeling in their favour—took the horses from their carriage, and drew it over the Long Bridge in triumph, with acclamations and loud and unanimous wishes for their success.

From all these accumulated causes it is but reasonable to expect that many Societies of United Irishmen should now be in



Belfast. Such is the fact. The general body presented petitions to Parliament in the name which it had assumed, and was countenanced by men of influence and character in the town, both lay and clerical.

But as yet, or up to 1793, no riot or disorder had taken place. The armed citizens were now called National Volunteers, sometimes National Guards; and the colour *green*, symbolic of nationality, entered more prominently into their military costume. They met sometimes on Sundays, to transact business, to consider the reports of committees, and to parade in uniform, after which they attended divine service in one of the meeting-houses of the town. In the *Northern Star* there even appears an address from the Irish Jacobins of Belfast. The times began to be called alarming, and numerous symptoms were apparent of coming disturbance. The Government at last proceeded to take decided steps, and a formal proclamation, dated 11th March, 1793, stated that assemblages of men in military form were prejudicial to the public peace and to good government; that such bodies were levied and arrayed in the town of Belfast, and drilled and exercised there by day and by night. They declared, the proclamation states, their object to be to seek redress of alleged grievances, "but their obvious intention was to overawe the Parliament and the Government and to dictate to both;" and that arms and gunpowder to a very large extent had been sent to Belfast; whereupon all such associations were forbidden to assemble, and if neglecting to disperse at the order of the civil magistrate, General Whyte, commanding in the district, was to give assistance. Thus ended the Volunteers, so great and glorious, in 1782, and their adviser, the *Northern Star*, recommended obedience to the Proclamation. About the same period a considerable riot took place in the town. The Volunteers or United Irishmen, or whatever they might now be called, did not drink patriotic toasts at banquets only, or make processions through the town in evidence of their temper and inclination, but some of them placed in permanent form above their doors signboards on which were representations of eminent French generals or politicians. Angry or extra loyal dragoons,

who had just arrived in the town, seeing no living enemies, attacked the harmless images. They succeeded in pulling down the sign of Dumourier<sup>1</sup> which was above the door of a publican in North Street; "they sallied then to Mr. McCabe's and destroyed all his windows; then did the same to the house of a milliner, Miss Wills, in the Main Street (High Street), where some volunteer caps and cockades were displayed; they tore down the sign of Dr. Franklin at Watson's in Forest Lane, and attacked in a reckless manner several inhabitants." They only threatened on this occasion the *Northern Star* office, but it is possible that if they had not been brought to order by the exertions of their officers and the civil power, the printing in that establishment might have come to a premature and violent end much sooner than it really did. A most excellent letter on this subject, written by a lady resident in Belfast, in which is an account of this, the first of several military riots which happened a short time before the rebellion, is among Dr. Drennan's letters. It differs but little from the above report, but is more original, and as it contains several points and allusions referring to the state of the town in 1793, no excuse is needed for the introduction of a few extracts from it. The writer was the sister of Dr. Drennan, and partook of his political opinions and ardour, and no small portion of his talent.

"Yesterday's paper I suppose would give you a better account of the late transaction here than I could, tho' I w<sup>d</sup> certainly have given it a little more *glow* than Mr. Joy has done. Sure I am that his recital cannot give the same idea of the matter that is stamped on the Belfast mind. . . . In Joy, General White and Capt<sup>n</sup> M'Donnell are the prominent features. . . . We know the gentlemen were on the back ground. White was at C. Fergus and M'Donnell was at Tea with the Ladies, so near, that as *they* heard the clamour he could not avoid going out; and taking two or three Soldiers to the Barrack he returned to his party and talk'd well of what he would have done had he been an officer of the Troop. The only atonement made to the Town is the removal of all the Horse. . . . These daring offenders

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<sup>1</sup> There is a lengthened account of this military riot in no less a publication than the *Anthologia Hibernica*, vol. i., p. 240, 1793,

have escaped punishment. One could hardly indeed at such a time, and in the present state of our Volunteers, purchase their absence at too dear a rate. I c<sup>d</sup> myself produce a creditable witness who in Dundalk heard one of the officers—I could name him—desire them when they came to Belfast not to spare Leg, Arm, or Life. They served to this trade with remarkable success in the American war, and to prevent rust have kept it up with the wretched Defenders. The Belfast Troop was their object, but they got a hint of their danger. Disappointed in this plan for a tumult they sally'd with a ladder which reached Dumourier, but Franklin could not be got down even by those heroes. . . . You will see that the Volunteers have come to some terms with General White. On Sunday and Monday they certainly triumphed. The Town was full of Countrymen—above 1000 men armed met at the New Erection. Mr. Bristow and Captain Wallace went to them and used every argument *they* could suggest, but were treated with scorn and denial till they heard the agreement made by the Vol<sup>s</sup>, for these men were not of that body. . . . The Committee sat yesterday examining like their betters, and to say the truth I think with equal wisdom now the criminals are gone. They departed in triumph with Gen<sup>l</sup> Dumourier's wooden head while there was a huzza of women and children at their departure. . . . In any other Town they would have been stoned to death, but there never was a Belfast mob. Happy for us at present, for I do believe it was ardently sought for.

“In the universal Lye that prevails Mr. Bristow has brought in Sam's name as having received a letter from France offering this country 10,000 men. This story of his telling we heard several weeks ago, but laugh'd at, and left it to him to amuse the old women here, and in the Secret Committee with. . . . Your party at Newgate will be a curious one—the Belfast part is. They are not of my list but may in the present time be good men. H. I have heard well spoken of as a decent man—M<sup>c</sup>—— as a spitfire,—and Ma—— was, since the last Election, a suspected character. . . . I hope you stir your own fire. I hope to do it also before a month is out, but the state of this town at present forbids it.

“One would think the power of the Proclamation sufficient in a Town where I can walk from one end to the other without a Servant at 9 o'clock. Yet I have reason to believe other strong measures are hatching and will be enforced whenever the town is got out of the Peace. At present Lake (a good man) is responsible. . . . Next week I suspect the *Star* office will be a third time stormed. . . .

A stranger entering the town would be struck by the sounds of innocence, the children eternally crying Ba, Ba, after every yeoman, while the mothers run after them crying if they do not behave themselves they will be put on board the Fleet."

The chief name worthy to be remembered as suffering from this riot is that of Thomas M'Cabe, one of those strongly imbued with the prevailing political spirit of the time. He is said to have been a watchmaker and silversmith—was one of the most useful inhabitants, honourably united with others in founding the cotton manufacture in Belfast, frequently mentioned in *Tone's Journal*, and always in terms of great praise, for integrity and unselfish patriotism. When in 1786 a meeting was held here to favour the introduction of the slave trade into Belfast, M'Cabe used, in opposition to it, these memorable words, and which had the effect of diverting the unholy traffic for ever from the town: "May God wither the hand and consign the name to eternal infamy of him who first signs that document." Yet this man so worthy had all his windows broken in the riot, a single pane only in one of them escaping; and when, soon after, the town being illuminated in honour of the King's birthday, and as an evidence of loyalty for the concession of the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics, he, with an irony the most cutting, caused this solitary pane to be filled with candles, all the others remaining broken and ruined as they had been left by the wreckers. It was either on this occasion or shortly before it he placed over his door—"Thomas M'Cabe, an Irish Slave, Dealer in Gold and Silver;" which Mr. Tone, who must have been greatly tickled by the term, adopts as his political sobriquet. His residence was either at the foot of North Street or in one of the small houses which then existed where the Commercial Buildings now stand, and where several more of the leading characters of the town also dwelt. His son, Putnam M'Cabe, was a native of Belfast, and took an active part in the rebellion. He was the friend and assistant of the great leaders, the body guard of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, always escaping detection and bringing in reports from his wonderful facility of personating the most varied

characters. His disguises and exploits are amply detailed in the work specially devoted to this subject.<sup>1</sup>

All the Societies of United Irishmen continued their open demonstrations. They presented addresses under their avowed title to eminent persons passing through Belfast, and gave them public banquets, not failing to indulge in those significant toasts which expressed the opinions both of hosts and guests. Neither Tone nor Russell appears on these occasions; they were occupied in the furtherance of the project which was spreading its net through the whole kingdom. In 1795 Tone came here again. "I set off for Belfast," he says in his Journal, "on the 20th of May, was well received, enjoyed constant parties and excursions, and staid a month in the town." His Journal leaves no doubt of the participation of the Belfast men in all his views. He sailed from this town to America, but did not long make that land of freedom his place of abode.

Earl Fitzwilliam was appointed Lord Lieutenant in the same year (1795), and great hopes arose in consequence that such a choice indicated an intention on the part of the Government to alter their Irish policy, and to adopt that favoured by a large portion of the people. All disturbances, it was now imagined, were about to cease, and all reasonable complaints to be rectified. The new Viceroy was known to be the advocate of full Catholic Emancipation, and to favour many of the measures contended for by the United Irishmen. But such hopes were delusive; another change took place in the royal councils showing a reversal of the policy momentarily adopted. The popular Viceroy was recalled in March, 1795, and no place in Ireland resented the occurrence more pointedly than Belfast, which one would almost say displayed on the appointment an inclination to make peace with the Government, and to abandon all objectionable societies; but the day of Earl Fitzwilliam's recall after his two months' reign was marked as one of public mourning. All the shops were shut, as if some great calamity had happened,

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<sup>1</sup> *The United Irishmen and their Times.*



and nothing prevailed, the accounts of the day inform us, "but sullen indignation."

This event, it is natural to suppose, would but strengthen the bonds of union between the secret societies, and increase the sympathy in support of their pretensions of those not connected with them. The negotiations with France were now in progress. Tone was in Paris informing the Directory of the state of the people in Ireland, of their wishes, their hopes and their preparations, in which there is not much doubt Belfast came in for a due share of attention. The French Government was willing to assist, and some of the greatest names in their history are introduced in connection with the scheme of a descent upon Ireland with all convenient speed. In 1796 the negotiations were incessant. Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor were implicated therein; and genuine promises were made, and active steps were being taken, to enable Hoche to take an army to Ireland to assist the United Irishmen in making this country an independent republic like their own.

Two names especially connected with the Irish rebellion have just been mentioned—Lord Edward Fitzgerald and Arthur O'Connor. The author of the elaborate work, *The United Irishmen and their Times*, has there stated that both were in Belfast in 1796, and had taken a house near the town, where they resided for some months. The day is distant to which this statement refers, and none now living can either refute or confirm it from personal knowledge. Arthur O'Connor was in this town seeking for the office of parliamentary representative for the county of Antrim,<sup>1</sup> but that Lord Edward Fitzgerald, to whose name so

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<sup>1</sup> "Colonel Barber the Sovereign, and a Military Guard visited Mr. O'Connor's House early this morning (3rd February, 1797)."

"Found him not at home, searched the House and carried off Papers. On their return to Town they arrested some parties in Belfast."

The manner in which the above is worded would lead to the belief that O'Connor at least had a house NEAR THE TOWN in February, 1797. It is from the *Northern Star*.

In the *News-Letter* of February 2nd, 1797, it is also expressly stated that "a military guard has been placed since Friday last on Arthur O'Connor's house near this town."



much more interest is attached, was his companion, and really lived here for a considerable period, was a statement too curious not to raise inquiry. Such residence is unmentioned in Thomas Moore's *Life of Lord Edward*, in which, if anywhere, it would naturally be looked for; and being desirous of knowing what proof there was of its correctness, and more particularly, if true, whether any precise particulars could be obtained of his doings or movements when here, the author of the valuable work in which it is made was written to for his authority, or for details, and in due time, with much candour, replied, ending his answer in these words, "I cannot do more than state to you that no information I ever received on the subject would lead me to believe he was." It must therefore be considered an error.

Although so much has been written about the Irish rebellion, there is still a vast deal to be learned concerning it. In those unhappy days great need existed for concealment and secrecy, there were so many spies and informers abroad, so many false statements current, that no one can say the whole is known. Curious events may be lost for ever; or the course of the history may be so distorted as to be now incapable of a full disclosure. Let it not be said definitively that this story is without a foundation of some sort. In the newspaper of March 23, 1798, it is said that several houses in this town were ineffectually searched for Lord Edward Fitzgerald, which indicated a possible belief that the person so named had at some time sought refuge in Belfast.

The United Irishmen were extending their system month by month, and probably not without the knowledge of the Government. Mr. Neilson, accused of high treason, was arrested in Belfast; Thomas Russell surrendered himself; and many other persons were made prisoners here whose names it would be needless now to repeat. They were sent to Dublin or Fort George in Scotland. So far, therefore, both Neilson and Russell escaped from active participation in the rebellion, as did also their friend Tone, who was in France watching the preparations for the invasion of Ireland, and hurrying them forward. He knew what

was going on in Belfast in his absence, and his Journal expressively records his feelings. Alluding to the arrests here he says—

“If we are not in Ireland time enough to rescue them they are gone. . . . Good God! if Russell and Neilson fall where shall I find two such men to replace them? My poor friend Russell with whom I have spent the happiest hours of my life and whom I love with the affection of a brother . . . and Neilson, an honest, brave and worthy fellow. . . . My heart smites me now for the levity with which I have spoken of my poor Russell in these memorandums under the signature of P.P.”

Tone had even heard of the breaking open of the King's Stores in Calendar Street in this town, when ten barrels of gunpowder were abstracted. He mentions the fact in his Journal as an omen favourable to the revolutionary cause.

The information obtained in an after time from State prisoners, who were assured of their lives, of the progress of the rebellion and its position at different periods, will be found in their examinations before the Secret Committee of the House of Lords in most ample detail. Mr. Neilson of Belfast was one of the prisoners so situated, and the replies of all are quite open and candid. The affiliation system is explained, and the ingenious and comprehensive arrangement by which the subordinate committees, set in motion in 1792, were governed and communicated with; the negotiations with France, the military organisation, and the intention to carry their measures by force, are all freely acknowledged. But the arrest of so many of their most trusted leaders and the flight of others had broken the regularity of the ranks, it not being possible to supply the blanks at once. The whole evidence proved the immense extent and formidable character of the insurrection which was at hand.

The negotiations of the United Irishmen with the French Directory produced its fruit at last, and a fleet and army from France, with General Hoche in command, appeared at Bantry Bay at the end of the year 1796. Tone was on board, and his Diary, both of this and the other French invasions, or prepara-

tions for invasion, relates, in his customary expressive language, his gladness at the prospect of immediate success, and his despair when the elements combined both in Ireland and at the Texel to thwart the extensive projects undertaken. The consequences that might have followed a successful landing at Bantry Bay have been frequently commented on; and though it was in a place far distant from Belfast, its effects here, from the disaffection all around, might, and probably would have been, as sudden and disastrous as in any part of Ireland. A large meeting was held on 2nd January, 1797, at which resolutions were passed that would now be deemed mild and tolerant to a degree, but because they were not confined to the professed object of their assembling—which was to consider how they were to proceed in case of the French effecting a landing—but entered into the topic of Parliamentary Reform, some declaring that they were “willing to arm in like manner as the Volunteers whose memory we revere and whose example we wish to imitate,” the head of the magistracy, Mr. Brown, the Sovereign, and the head of the Church, the Rev. Wm. Bristow, both held aloof and refused to co-operate. But a large portion of the inhabitants exhibited a proper spirit; yeomanry and militia were embodied and acted as preservers of the public peace, and prepared, like the Volunteers, to defend the town, if necessary, against a foreign enemy. The Belfast Yeomanry, or a portion of them at least, thought proper to issue an address to their fellow-townsmen, declaring that their feelings politically were unchanged, that they continued firmly attached to the rights and liberties of *all* the people of Ireland, but that foreign invasion they were resolved to resist, and to protect the persons and properties of their neighbours.

The United Irishmen acutely felt the disappointment resulting from the dispersion of the French fleet at Bantry Bay. Many advised that they should persevere without foreign assistance. At any rate, they did persevere, and it was on the 14th of April, 1797, only about three months after the French failure, that the numerous arrests of the body in full meeting, and the seizure of important papers, took place at the house of John Alexander, on

Peter's Hill, in Belfast.<sup>1</sup> The written documents revealed the entire system of baronial, provincial, and national committees, the nature of the constitutions, and the test which sealed the admission of members.<sup>2</sup> By these papers the force consisted, in Belfast alone, of 2639 men, 526 guns, 399 bayonets, 88 pistols, 567 pikes, 12,130 ball cartridges, 15,953 balls, 6 cannons, and 1 mortar. In the County Antrim above 23,000 men were enrolled in the conspiracy, with a proportionate amount of arms and ammunition. Many of these in this year and the next fell into the possession of the Government. Some of the cannons, officially declared to have belonged to the Volunteers, were now said to be in rebellious hands. Seizures of arms became frequent; home-made pike makers were captured near Belfast, the weapons being sometimes hung round the owners or stuck into their hats, in which picturesque guise they were marched as prisoners into the town.

The year 1797 was therefore one of unceasing discouragements to the United Irishmen. From Tone's own Journal the true history can be gathered more clearly perhaps than from any other source. He was again labouring in France, urging the equipment and despatch of another expedition to the Irish patriots. The connection of a few notes from Tone and others may be readily filled up. "The *Union Star* at Belfast took the place of the *Northern Star* in the summer of 1797."<sup>3</sup> "The expedition to Bantry Bay had failed, but it had proved the facility of invading Ireland;" after it the system of United Irishmen made a rapid progress in the county of Cork, and "Bandon was become a second Belfast."

"On August 5th," says Tone, "two persons arrived here, one from

<sup>1</sup> This house in 1797, and long after, was one of the most important inns or places of resort in the town.

<sup>2</sup> These papers will be found at full length in the Report from the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Commons in Ireland, No. 29.

<sup>3</sup> For Mr. M'Skimin's probably correct account of this occasional and incendiary paper, see his *Annals of Ulster or Ireland Fifty Years Ago*, p. 69. Belfast, 1851.

Belfast, the other a member of the Co. Down Executive Committee. I am in no degree delighted with the intelligence which they bring. The persecution of Ireland is at its height; and the people there, seeing no prospect of succour, which has been so long promised to them, are beginning to lose confidence in themselves and their chiefs, whom they almost suspect of deceiving them. They ground their suspicions on the great crisis of the mutiny (in the British fleet) being suffered to pass by without the French government making the smallest attempt to profit of it."

On 12th August Tone's disappointment was complete, the French Admiral representing to him that, what with adverse winds and other causes, the expedition, so large, and which had been so long in preparation, must for the present be abandoned. "It is most terrible," writes this unfortunate man; "twice, within nine months, has England been saved by the wind." The revolutionary party at home were aware of the great preparations which were still being made abroad in their favour. "At a meeting in Belfast on the 10th of July a provincial delegate for the county of Antrim said there were 75,000 men at the Texel who were positively coming to Ireland." The neighbourhood of Belfast was mentioned as a desirable spot for the debarkation, and a frequent desire is expressed by Tone to land there. His affection for the Cave Hill was excessive; he was perhaps thinking of the two glorious summer days he had spent on it in 1795; and exclaims, "What would I give to-night if we were safely landed and encamped on the Cave Hill!"

Through all this there were fears, mistrusts, apprehensions, that the Catholics and Dissenters would form two opposing parties; "the Provincial Delegates of Leinster were not met in Dublin according to agreement by the Ulster Delegates who sat in Belfast several days" debating on the measures to be pursued. "A few spirited men in Belfast, seeing the business frustrated, subscribed five hundred guineas to send a person to France." The object of this new emissary, it is to be supposed, was to bring intelligence of the true state of affairs in that country. It is unnecessary to point out how often our town is mentioned in



these few extracts, and how deeply it was implicated in the rebellion now drawing to its crisis. The French fleet had put to sea without the army, and on the 11th of October, 1797, was defeated at the battle of Camperdown by Admiral Duncan.<sup>1</sup> From various causes the North and South did not act in concert, the former being desirous of waiting for the French, the latter resolved on immediate action. Lord Edward Fitzgerald was attended with fidelity in the latter days of his inauspicious career by Samuel Neilson and Putnam M'Cabe, but his capture was another blow to the rebellion, leaving it without a head.

June, 1798, was the month in which, as some enthusiasts said at the time, "the war commenced;" but which others, seeing the frequent interruptions, "the hopes delayed," the weakened ranks, the disunited party, were wont to describe with more accuracy as that in which the bubble burst. The Sunday preceding the actual outbreak is still traditionally called "Pike Sunday," as being that on which these weapons were sharpened for the coming fray. There was no battle or bloodshed in Belfast, but Antrim and Ballynahinch, neither very distant from it, were the centres of two of the most serious struggles which took place in the North of Ireland in 1798. The roar of the battle in the latter place was distinctly heard in Belfast, it is said, during its progress. All business was suspended, the several avenues to the town were guarded, and military law prevailed. When the warfare ended, and a reckoning was made of those who were undoubtedly guilty, it was found that only six could be capitally convicted, who were resident here or brought into the town, all of whom suffered death within our streets. The executions took place at the old Market House, so often mentioned in other and more peaceful relations. One of the prisoners was hanged on a lamp-post near or opposite to the Market House, and the heads of the culprits are generally described as having been put on poles to blacken in the sun. Some escapes and hairbreadth

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the preceding extracts are drawn from Wright's *History of Ireland*, vol. ii., pp. 628-638, which gives a view of the general history at much length—of course devoid of local detail.



adventures were long talked of as having happened in those perilous times; that of William Kean has been related in various ways—that he escaped and went from Bank Lane in the bed of the High Street River, then covered over for some distance, and that he was actually crouched beneath one of the iron traps formerly in the street when a trumpeter was on the top of it proclaiming that any person who harboured or connived at the escape of the said Kean would “be hanged and his house burned.” That the culprit should have been directly under the speaker would be too romantic, though it is certain that such a notice in the form of a proclamation, concluding with the last terrific words, really was promulgated. Many other adventures equally thrilling were circulated, and could still be gathered from the lips of those whose forefathers were engaged in the struggle, or who have acquired a liking for the exciting subject. The romance of the United Irishmen is yet unwritten. Something has been done quite recently, but chiefly in Dublin and other parts of Ireland, but not in the North, where the people were more stern and prosaic; still revelations of a romantic kind here are possibly for ever buried in oblivion.

It might now have been almost called the Reign of Terror in Belfast, if the arbitrary conduct of officials and the account of the many who suffered for misdeeds, real or supposed, can be taken as authentic. But contemporary letters, from one whose actions and correspondence have already been largely used, will give an unquestionably correct view of the state of public feeling in the town in the disastrous summer of 1798. The three following letters from Dr. Haliday to his friend and correspondent, the Earl of Charlemont, are examples of such, and though tinged, as was inevitable, with political sentiments, they must not be deemed the less trustworthy and interesting on that account.<sup>1</sup> They express the feelings of many in Belfast, or rather are a true exposition of the general sentiments. Dr. Haliday himself must have witnessed with sorrow the different aspect of our

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<sup>1</sup> These three letters are perfectly original, and to the kindness and liberality of John P. Prendergast, Esq., of Dublin, the reader is indebted for them.

streets in 1798 from that which they presented in the glorious days of the Volunteers.

*Dr. A. H. Haliday to Lord Charlemont.*

“BELFAST, *June ult., 1798.*

“One hurricane blown over, we are now enjoying a comparative calm, which I hope is neither temporary nor deceitful, yet I sometimes think

‘————— of the sweeping whirlwind’s sway,  
Which hushed in *grim* Repose expects his ev’ning Prey ;’

and to say truth, my dear Lord, this Image of Gray’s has often dismayed me for years past, as the ghost of Samuel did Saul.

“*Toutjours malheur pour quelque chose est bon* ; Ovid says or he sais something like it, that Phæton’s setting the World in a blaze had its uses, as folks could go to bed without the help of a Candle ; so the Corners of the Tower of our ruinous market house are now ornamenting with the heads of Traitors, & truly some ornament was much needed ; You will think the Times have harden’d my heart—perhaps they have ; it is a general and natural operation of such times to harden hearts ; I see too much of this ; but the fact is, that the only head which is yet stuck up and was a clever one, had enter’d into a partnership with as bad a heart as ever existed—cruel, blood-thirsty, murderous ; so much so, that his own Followers would have kill’d him, had the Court Martial not saved them the trouble.<sup>1</sup> Yet he sustained his trial, sentence, & the execution thereof, with perfect firmness, composure, and quite collected—as did General Monroe at Lisburn ; let us no longer wonder at the calmness with which a Bailli, a Levoisier & the other victims of Marius Robespierre’s infernal Tyranny met their fate ; these are things to puzzle a man who strives to solve that inexplicable Riddle, the human heart. I understand the different Courts Martial act very honourably and dispassionately ; had those whose perverse hardness of heart render’d such Courts perhaps necessary acted on such principles and with such temper, we should not now have the painful, the mortifying, spectacle of five soldiers adjudging citizens to death instead of the unanimous voice of twelve of his Peers ; whether this old fashioned species of trial shall ever again become the mode in

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<sup>1</sup> Who was the shocking character here described ? The first of the six persons executed in Belfast was William Magill, on the 12th June, 1798—at least this is the usual record. The only public crime laid to his charge was that he had sworn soldiers from their allegiance.

this devoted land, seems somewhat doubtful; yet it is still less so, that your Lordship and I, who are well stricken in years, will drag out our remaining days under law-martial; though I hope not die by it; to adorn with our wrinkled visages the Corners of an antiquated Tower."

*To the Earl of Charlemont.*

"BELFAST, July 12, 1798.

"Government after turning our aged, infirm and infant Poor, out of our Poor House, to their and our great annoyance and distress, insist on our selling it to them in perpetuity;<sup>1</sup> we should take them at their word; or under the present Code, they may take it for nothing; as it was built, at a very great expense, in the most elevated situation, this Town afforded, it will make a good Citadel; as for the old Inhabitants I think it would be right to compel them all, men, women, & Children to become United Irishmen, and then either hang them for being such, or transport them for life to Arabia Petrea where those who ask'd for bread will be sure at least of getting a stone; we have as yet but three heads on our old Tower; I hope there will soon be a fourth (I wish I could have the choice) for the unfurnished corner looks simple enough without one; with our old attachments, I have the honour of being, your Lordship's &c., &c., &c., &c.,

"A. H. HALIDAY."

*Dr. A. H. Haliday to the Earl of Charlemont.*

"BELFAST, 8th Aug., 1798.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"This famous Town is becoming from day to day less interesting—it resumes by degrees its ordinary features of stupidity; our Jails are now but thinly inhabited, our Courts-martial no longer sit for blood; our streets are not so gaily adorn'd and encumber'd with Heroes in red and blue; and our brisk juvenile military Magistrates are gradually relinquishing the Civil department, to our old, slow-eyed Justices of the Peace. Even Newton the Head quarters of severity (a Priest sat there as Judge Advocate) exhibits a sullen acquiescence with the new, absurd system of mercy & humanity; passing through on Saturday, I took notice that the Gallows was struck after suspending no more than a beggarly dozen; here we had but half that number who died with such 'grinning honours,' and may now despair of ever rivalling that petty borrough in a display of that

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<sup>1</sup> Can there be any truth in this? It has never appeared before in any document regarding the Poorhouse.

first of Virtues Loyalty, and its favourite Guardian, wholesome severity ; yet after all, our tender mercies are in many instances cruelties—useful members of Society being banish'd, some for ever, for no other reason, than that they had been confined on groundless suspicion ; or for very slight offences, which it required a microscopic eye to magnify into guilt—in one instance an old, valuable interesting friend of mine, no inhabitant of this town, to purchase the life of the only delinquent in his Family was obliged to banish himself and the whole of it for ever—it consists of four sons and five daughters one of the former about to take his degree in Dublin College with applause, and who could have the most satisfactory attestations of his good conduct and principles—a great part of my Friend's property with his books and valuable Papers had been wantonly destroyed by the military in an early stage of this business, and what remains of his valuables, will not fetch, through the suddenness of his departure & the complexion of the times one half of their real value. I delivered this unvarnish'd tale to a worthy Lord of our acquaintance and he said it was a just & reasonable proceeding—and I said nothing."

Of the insurgents executed in Belfast Henry Joy M'Cracken was the best known and the most regretted. But he had been commander at Antrim ; his printed manifesto, proclaiming, in weak imitation of the French model, the 6th June, 1798, as the "First year of Liberty," was extensively circulated ; and when taken prisoner a few days after the battle it was felt that he could not be saved. He was related to some of the most respectable families in Belfast ; and a most lengthened narrative of his career and death is in the *History of the United Irishmen*, procured, it is said by the author, from the near and affectionate relative who clung to him to the last, and who herself died only a few years ago. She was one of the very last who could speak from personal knowledge and recollection of the history of 1798 in Belfast. M'Cracken ended his life, like the others, at the Market House, was buried in the churchyard in High Street, "close to the corner of the School House where the door is," one of the last allusions ever made to the Town School-house. Tone and Russell met with deaths not less untimely. The former died by his own hands

when awaiting execution; the latter, five years after the death or exile of his friends, entered into an absurd rebellion again, in the desire of reviving the dead embers of 1798, was taken prisoner, tried, and executed in Downpatrick, and a stone in the burying-place there, on which are chiselled the words, "The Grave of Russell," may yet keep green for a time the memory of his name.

The literature of the Volunteers and the United Irishmen of Belfast would fill volumes. What has been here written, containing at least some original matter, must suffice. To the present generation the entire is almost an unknown story—"a tale of the times of old." Yet the last twenty years of the eighteenth century was a period more full of interest, more productive of large results, than any of the same length since Belfast had first a name. The men who could speak personally of the sights which they had seen or the deeds which they had done as Volunteers or United Irishmen have all passed away, and it is hardly to be now expected that, among the majority in this young, busy, commercial community, the eloquent and passionate appeals of either body should find an echo. It is at the same time true that the highest in rank and the most distinguished in talent, both in town and country, referring by these words to Belfast and its neighbourhood, were Volunteers from the most unimpeachable motives; that the Society of United Irishmen also contained many such within its ranks, and was only abandoned by them when the design of the originators and early leaders—armed rebellion by foreign assistance—became avowed. The few last pages of this history are shrouded in clouds and darkness. When the collapse came, there followed a time of serious depression, of decreased value of property, and general apprehension of organic changes, happily not realised. All ended in a Parliamentary Union between Great Britain and Ireland, which had its advocates and opponents here as well as in other parts of the kingdom. The spirit and enthusiasm of those distant days have long died out in the meaning of the last century. Objects desirable and useful are now obtained by means more



peaceable, more powerful, and more in consonance with a better educated and thinking community.

Since 1800—indeed very long since that era—Belfast has entered on a great career; and speaking of age, in reference to a town, is almost literally, as the expression is commonly used, a place of yesterday—as opposite in appearance to the town of the eighteenth century as if they were different places. Except the very few establishments now dimmed or nearly lost sight of, and which were mentioned as existing previously to the year 1800 in the *Modern Topography of Belfast*, there is scarcely a magnificent street, great building, or noble institution which has not had its origin in this century. The town is ever striding on to new conquests in commerce and manufacture, bringing with them all the subsidiary adjuncts which make a place stable and flourishing. It is the commercial metropolis of Ireland, “its entire trade being estimated at over 26 millions of pounds per annum” in the value of its Imports and Exports, “and exceeding the amount of all the other Irish ports taken together.”<sup>1</sup> Yet it is said that the total port dues received on linens amount only to  $12\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. of the entire receipts, so great has been the extension of our foreign and colonial commerce.<sup>2</sup> This is not a certain index, however, by which to estimate the comparative importance of the linen trade in all its relations. If any one should now undertake the compiling of Belfast history from the year 1800, it will be found very far indeed from being an unproductive or barren subject. Such writer will feel the necessity of taking larger and deeper views of commerce with the whole world, and all the connecting elements thereby created, than were understood or were possible till the nineteenth century had far proceeded on its course.

It has been frequently stated that the perpetuity leases granted

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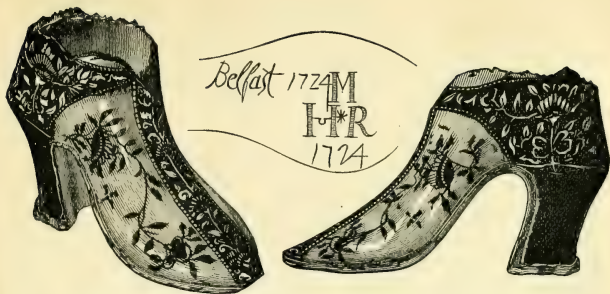
<sup>1</sup> This statement was made recently at a meeting of commercial travellers in the town. When all the other ports of Ireland are mentioned, Dublin, it is presumed, is not included.

<sup>2</sup> Speech of Mr. Musgrave at a meeting of the Chamber of Commerce, February 16th, 1877.



about the year 1822 caused the recent unexampled progress of Belfast. This onward step, and the introduction of flax-spinning, which soon followed it, have probably laid the foundation of its modern greatness; at any rate, these two causes hastened its natural and constant progress. One of them is not much more than fifty years old, the other not so much; and if the perpetuity leases were the groundwork, they might have been comparatively unavailing if there had not been capital, talent, and enterprise to take advantage of the opportunity.

The Belfast of early days is quite a different theme, yet is unfortunately wanting in all the great essentials with which towns and cities, either ancient or so large, often abound. We have no musty charters or archives, no rare church history, no patron saint to reverence, no old buildings, civil or ecclesiastical, surrounded with historic associations, or glowing with the antique beauty of mediæval days, no real archaeological lore, unless by connecting our locality with the Earls of Ulster, which would not be reasonable. All here is of modern origin and modern fashion; we have spacious streets, stately buildings, huge mills, and edifices of every kind and for every purpose. The life of the eighteenth century, so recent, so quaint in our eyes when a glimpse of it can be recovered, has been pushed into the well of forgetfulness. There was a Maypole in the last century at the Stone Bridge in High Street, around which the youthful population of the small town disported in rustic fashion. This, with many another custom as well, has gone the way of all gay garlands. Another age, other ideas, other pursuits have overtaken us, all but in natural progression to the half-million of human beings who in a century, perhaps in far less time, will dwell together, it is earnestly hoped, in mutual concord, and it is not to be doubted in mutual industry, on the banks of the Lagan.



The above represents a specimen of the early POTTERY MANUFACTURE of Belfast. It was discovered after the publication of the work, and being anxious to preserve any information that is procurable of our early manufactures, this short supplement is supplied with that view. At p. 355 "the new Pottery" is mentioned as being in existence in 1698, and again by Molyneux in 1708, after which latter time no farther account of it or the era of its extinction could be obtained. The date and inscription on the object here represented prove that it still flourished in the year 1724. The article represents a lady's boot in strong delf ware; it is six inches in length, the heel is two inches in height, making the opening at the middle of the sole a clear space of an inch and a-half high, and therefore very large in proportion to the length of the object. It is a true representation of a lady's boot of the period, and perhaps not very materially differing from that in use at the present time, so much objected to as being prejudicial to health. It is of a dark blue on a white ground, plentifully ornamented with flowers, blue in colour on the white ground and white on the blue, and was most probably one of the artistic articles of the day intended as an ornament of the mantelpiece. In such situation it may have held flowers, the interior being, of course, open for that or some similar purpose. The inscription, however, is that which alone gives it value, the date 1724 being twice marked, with the initials M. H. R., and the word Belfast at the beginning. All these are upon the sole and burned in, and the genuineness of the article cannot be doubted. It proves the existence of the manufacture for twenty-six years (1698-1724). So far as known it is *unique*, though it is possible that other specimens of the early pottery

work of Belfast may yet be found in the town. The curious relic here described is the property of a lady in Belfast, who states that it belonged to her grandmother.

THE PICTURE OF THE ADELPHI CLUB mentioned at p. 607 is in the possession of Mr. J. C. Pinkerton, Victoria Street, Belfast. The reference to it, and that it was painted by Anthony Williams, are very distinctly stated by John Bernard, who was a member of the club, in his *Retrospections*. The two most conspicuous figures in the picture are Amyas Griffith and James Pinkerton, grandfather of its present owner. There are ten persons in all represented, who constituted the literary brothers of Belfast about 1782. All are identified except one, their names being—Mr. Cherry, player; Amyas Griffith, surveyor; James Pinkerton, merchant; Richard Cox Rowe, comedian;\* Mr. Haslett, merchant; Thomas Gibon, merchant; Anthony Williams (Pasquin), painter; John Bernard, player; Mr. Atkins, owner and manager of the Belfast Theatre—the next in succession is not known. Griffith states in his Tracts that his necessities compelled him to sell this picture. Mr. Pinkerton was doubtless the purchaser. It was a slight error to state that the members of the club—some of whom are seated, but more standing—were engaged only in literary discussion. There are certainly some books on the table, but there are also a decanter of rum, glasses, and other indications of a symposium; a tankard of foaming ale is in the hand of Amyas Griffith. The representation of Bernard is conjectural partly, though well founded, as he was not only, by his own account, one of the society, but the person taken for him has a considerable resemblance to his portrait engraved as a frontispiece to his *Retrospections*. The picture, though now nearly a hundred years old, is in good preservation, and may continue so for generations yet to come.

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\* Mr. Rowe was buried in Newtownbreda Churchyard in 1792, where his tomb is still to be seen. The following is the inscription on his gravestone:—"Public Gratitude erected this stone to the memory of RICHARD COX ROWE, a celebrated comedian. He was born in Dublin in the year MDCCCLV., and died in Belfast, where he was universally admired on account of his merits as an actor, and his gentleness of manner as a man, on the 7th May, MDCCXCII.

"O Reader, if talents could ever beguile  
Thy bosom of cares, and instruct thee the while;  
If e'er thou wast charm'd from dull anguish and woe,  
Pay a sigh as a debt o'er the relics of Rowe."

## APPENDIXES.

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### NO. I.—AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EARL OF ESSEX AND NEYLE O'NEYLE.—*See p. 62.*

ARTICLES on which an agreement was made between the Earl of Essex and Neal O'Neill the son of Bernard [M'Brian] Fertagh, concerning his making his submission and doing his duty towards her most Excellent Majesty the Queen.

The same Neal acknowledges her Most Excellent Majesty Elizabeth . . . to be his natural prince and lady paramount, and as right is, he should do a vassal's duty, and he submits and devotes himself entirely to her Highness.

He promises that he will not harbour any traitor or rebel in his country, but if any such one should come into his country, so soon as ever he shall be admonished thereof by the governor or commissioners to be assigned by him, he will give his diligence to apprehend them, and send them to the governor or commissioners.

That he will not suffer any stealthes to be made by any one of the inhabitants of his country, nor to be brought thither out of any other country, but he will give over the thief or traitor to the governor or commissioners, or he will recompense the stealths and preys made fourfold.

That he will faithfully serve her Royal Majesty against all whomsoever her Majesty shall make war, with his soldiers, to be conducted by such Captains as he shall name.

That he will not give any pay, bonnaught, or other aid to any Scots, but to his power he will drive them away, and expel them from those parts.

Further, he promises and consents to answer to all expeditions which are called in English, Hostings, incursions, and warlike roads (? raids) to be made within the province of Ulster for her Majesty's service, with twelve proper horsemen with horses and arms, and eighty good kerne appareled as it is fit for the war whereof a part shall be musketeers.

That he shall carry himself well and peaceable towards all her Majesty's people.

He shall give unto the said Earl three pledges for the fulfilling of all these articles, conditions, and agreements made at the present deliberation, namely the son of Gilliduff de Gilmore, the son of Maurice de Gilmore, and the son of Owen de Gilmore.

In consideration of which conditions, articles, and agreements being performed on the part of the said Neal O'Neill, the aforesaid Captain General [Essex] has appointed, named, and ordained the said Neal chief captain of the country named below, viz., of all the lands between the water which is called Lagan unto the confines of Killulagh, and unto the confines of Macartan's country, and the confines of Coilwarlyn, and the confines of the Ardes, rendering and paying therefore for this first year one hundred kine at the Feast of All Saints next ensuing, and so thereafter. With this condition that if it shall so happen that the aforesaid country shall hereafter increase in wealth and abundance of kine, that then the said Neal shall augment his annual rent proportionally as the Baron of Dungannon, Captain Nicholas Malby, and Thomas Flemying shall think to be just and fitting.

The said Captain General further grants and promises that none of the natural followers of the said Neal shall hereafter be deemed, either by Magennis, by Maccartan, or any other subject of her Majesty, without the consent of the said Neal first obtained, and he promises to help and aid him to bring back any of his followers whomsoever and wheresoever they may be found.

Given at Dromore, 7th July, 1575, and in the 17th year of Queen Elizabeth.

WALTER ESSEX.

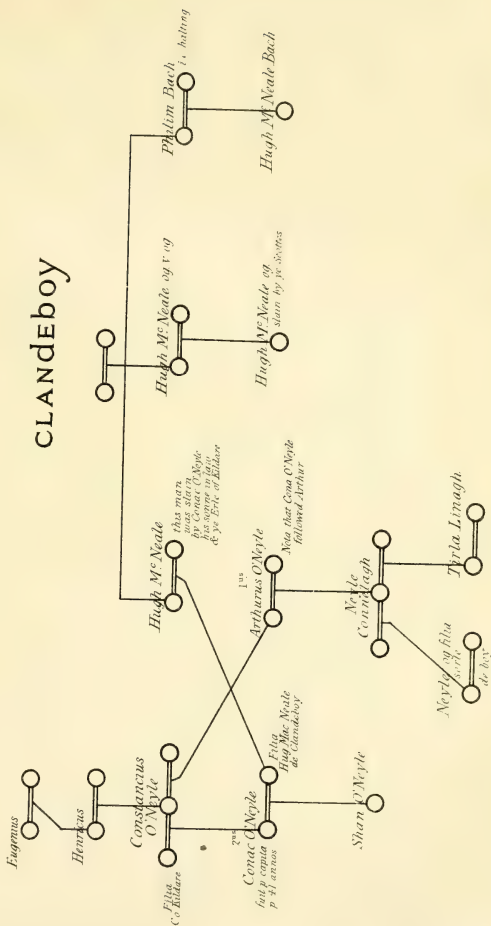
Endorsed, Articles between the Earl of Essex and Neal M'Brian Erto.

The above is from *State Papers*, Ireland, Eliz., vol. lii., No. 67.

The relationship of all those O'Neills is rather difficult to understand. The O'Neill mentioned in this covenant was cousin to the late Sir Brian, and, as stated in the text, father of Con O'Neill of Castlereagh. His full name was Neil M'Brian Fagartach. He appears to have been the same person whose ability to pay the number of kine as rent for Clannaboye was indirectly denied by other O'Neills, his kinsmen. This agreement was made by the Earl of Essex and Neal O'Neill when the former was still acting, as well as he was able, in the Queen's behalf in Clannaboye. It is a picture of the times of the highest interest.

The following genealogical tree of the O'Neills, drawn out in rather an unusual style, is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, and this may be a suitable place to introduce it. The genealogy of the Clannaboye O'Neills and others of the name is shown in it; though being only traced on the back of a letter by Cecil (Lord Burghley), which is stated at the top of the paper, it is devoid of desirable accuracy or fulness of detail.

## CLANDEBOY







NO. II.—STATEMENT OF THE CLAIM RAISED BY SIR WILLIAM SMITH TO THE CHICHESTER ESTATES IN 1607, AND ITS FINAL ENDING.—*See p. 83.*

THE following original paper refers to Sir William Smith's claim to the Estates of Sir Arthur Chichester and others in Clannaboye and the Ards. He was nephew to Sir Thomas Smith, but his claim was visionary, and had utterly lapsed in 1607. See in the text, p. 83, Sir Arthur's letter to Lord Salisbury.

A noate of the p.sent state of the Lands menconed in the Patent graunted by the late Queene vnder the great seale of England in the xiiij<sup>th</sup> yere of her Raigne, Anno Dm. 1572 to Sr Thomas Smith, and Thomas his sonne.

1. By Indent<sup>r</sup> bearing date 5<sup>o</sup> October. 13<sup>o</sup> Eliz: The said Sr Thomas Smith the father & Thomas the sonne, did coveñnt (amongst other things) w<sup>th</sup> her late Matie her heires & Successors in forme following. That Thomas the sonne, at their owne chardges would w<sup>th</sup> a power of naturall Englishmen enter into the Earledome of Vlster (in Ireland) By Comiission w<sup>ch</sup> was to endure for 7 yeres from the 28<sup>th</sup> of March then following, To subdue and repressse all Rebells w<sup>ch</sup> then were or then after should be in the great & Little Ardes, in Clandeboy, And to repressse all Rebells w<sup>ch</sup> then were or then after should be in thother Countries adioyning. So much as should amount to xije plough Landes, besides boggs, woodes & wasts, each plough Land to conteyne 120 acres Irish measure.

2. That they would settle and plant in all those places true and faithfull subjects so soone as tyme should conveniently suffer them.

3. That they would deuide the said country amongst those that would hazard themselves w<sup>th</sup> the said Tho: the sonne or otherwise ayde him w<sup>th</sup> men or money in the said enterprize. Gyving to eüy one & his heirs that should serve on foote at his owne chardges, One plough Land, And to eüy one that should serve at his own charges on horseback Two plough Lands.

4. That they from the 28<sup>th</sup> of March in A<sup>o</sup> Dñi 1579. should haue in a redynes w<sup>thin</sup> the said Countries & Lands to serve in defence of the same at the Inhabitants' costs and chardges, of eüy plough Land, one sufficient able English footman, for eüy Two plough Lands one sufficient able English herseman.

5. And they did further Coveñnte, That at eüy genall hosting, they vpon 15 daies warning should haue redy to attend the Deputie of Ireland for the tyme being w<sup>th</sup> sufficient Leaders and Captaynes, the Third pte of all such horsemen and footmen as by their tenure they should be bounde to fynde w<sup>thin</sup> the said Countries & Lands to serve the Queene her heires and Successors for the space of 40 daies in the Earldome of Vlster at his and their prop. costs & chardges.

6. And it was agreed That for eüy plough Land the Queene & her heires should haue 20s. Irish yerely.

Whereby it appeereth That the first Three Coveñantes were to be pformed presently. And the other Coveñante to be accomplished after the yere 1579.

Her Matie by Lres patentcs dated 16<sup>o</sup> Novembr, Anno regni sui 13<sup>o</sup>. In consideraçon only of the pformance of the Coveñntes and agream<sup>tes</sup> mencoyoned in the said Indenture, dyd graunte to the said Sr Tho: Smith and Tho: Smith the sonne, and the heires of the bodie of the said Thomas the sonne, And for default of such Issue to the right heires of the said Sr Thomas, All & singuler her manno<sup>rs</sup> Lands & hereditam<sup>ts</sup> in the great & Little Ardes & in Clandeboy besouth the Castells of Belfast, Mowbrey & Toome, and the Priorie of Masserine. Together w<sup>th</sup> the said Castells & Priorie, And all other Manno<sup>rs</sup> Lands & hereditam<sup>ts</sup> in Clandeboy Tyrone & the places adioyning in Vlster, w<sup>ch</sup> the said Sr Tho: or Thomas his sonne their heires or Assignes could obteyne possesse or inhabitt against the Irishe, before the 28<sup>th</sup> of March, 1579, w<sup>ch</sup> was 7 yeres & odd monethes after the date of the said Lres Patentcs.

In w<sup>ch</sup> Lres Patents there is a proviso in theis wordes viz<sup>t</sup> Proviso etiam vlterius, 2<sup>d</sup> si p d Thomas Smith pater et Thomas Smith filius et heredes eorundem non pimplebunt omnes et singulas convecones et agreement in dçis Indentur specificat ac ex pte sua sive eorum laterius pimplend Quod tunc Lre ñe patent vacue et nullius in lege vigor existent. Et qd extunc bene licebit nob hered et Suçe nris in omnia et singula premiss Reintrare ac eadem in pristmo iure nro possidere gaudere et tenere, Aliq<sup>o</sup> in his Lris paten aut in Indentur p d content in contrar non obstant.

Patents were past by the late Queene and Kinges Matie that now is of seùall pcells mencioned in Sr Tho. Smith's patent, to the psons following, vizt. In her late Ma<sup>ts</sup> tyme.

Of landes titles & hereditam <sup>tes</sup> in y <sup>e</sup> Ardes & Clandeboys.	{	{ To Gerald late Earl of Kildare.
Of landes tithes & hereditam <sup>tes</sup> w <sup>th</sup> in the Little Ardes.	{	{ To Henry late Earle of Kildare.
Of the Abby of Comber in the Clandeboys.	{	{ To one Allexander.
Of all y <sup>e</sup> temporalities in y <sup>e</sup> great Ardes & Vpper Clandeboy.	{	{ To one Dowdall.
Of certen lands and tithes belonging to Gray Abby & Bangor in the Ardes & Clandeboys.	{	{ To Sr Nicholas Bagnall Knight and Henry Bagnall.
	{	{ To Sr Con McNeale Oge.
	{	{ To Rice ap Hugh and Ambrose ap Hugh.

All theis were passed and graunted by the late Queene since the xx<sup>th</sup> yere of her Raigne.

In his Ma<sup>ts</sup> tyme, that now is.

Of the Castell & landes of Belfast & other Landes.	{	{ To Sr Arthure Chichester Knight now Lo: Deputie of Ireland.
Of sundry Abbies in y <sup>e</sup> Ardes and Clandeboys.	{	{ To John Kinge and Thomas Hibotts.

Of the Abby of Mavilla in the } { To one Trevilyon nephew to the  
Clandeboys. } { now Lo. Deputie.

Itt was founde by an office taken the 4<sup>th</sup> of July in the 3 yere of the King's Mat<sup>ys</sup> Raigne that now ys of England, by vertue of A Comission awarded out of the Court of Chauncery in Ireland, That neither Tho: Smith the father nor Tho: the sonne nor their heires nor Assignes, haue not at any tyme pformed the Coveñts & agream<sup>ts</sup> in the aboue said Indent<sup>r</sup> specified, whereupon his Mat<sup>ie</sup> entred into all and singuler the Lands conteyned in S<sup>r</sup> Tho. Smithe's said L<sup>res</sup> Patents, and after thereof made seūall Graunts in fee farme by L<sup>res</sup> Patents vnder the greate seale of Ireland to sundry psons viz<sup>t</sup>

Of sundry Landes in the Lower and Upper Clandeboys. { To James Hamilton, who bought the same Lands in consideraçon of 1700<sup>li</sup> ster: paid to his Mat<sup>ie</sup> w<sup>th</sup> a clause in his Patent to haue recompence of other the Kings like Crowne Lands for the same, yf any pte should be evicted, And vnto the said James Hamilton the psons herevnder named are Assignees of seūall pcells viz<sup>t</sup>

The Now Lo. Deputie (S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Phelipps),  
S<sup>r</sup> Hugh Montgomery, Cap<sup>ten</sup> Langford,  
Cap<sup>ten</sup> Clatworthie, Cap<sup>ten</sup> Hill & Cap<sup>ten</sup> Dalway.

To the said James Hamilton to the use of himself & of Con Oneale & S<sup>r</sup> Hugh Montgomy, vnto whome S<sup>r</sup> Foulke Conway ys assignee of a pte.

#### The Request.

Itt is humbly desired, That for the matter in Lawe concerning the Title of the said Pattentees the same may be referred to such of his Mat<sup>s</sup> Courts of Record in Ireland, where it is propley to be examined & tryed, And that in the meane tyme noe graunt or confirmacon be made of any the said Lands to S<sup>r</sup> William Smith.

And for any matter of equitie w<sup>ch</sup> S<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Smith can ptende—The Pattentees are redy to answere the same either before the Lords of his Mat<sup>s</sup> most ho<sup>ll</sup> privie Councell, or in any Court of equitie where yt shalbe thought fytt, the same to be determyned.

[Endorsed] A Noate of the Lands claymed by S<sup>r</sup> W<sup>m</sup> Smith Knight in Vlster in Ireland, now helde by L<sup>res</sup> Patents by S<sup>r</sup> Arthure Chichester Knight Lord Deputie of Ireland & dyū others.

No. III.—ADDITIONAL EXTRACTS FROM THE REPORT OF THE  
PLANTATION COMMISSIONERS OF A FEW PLACES IN DOWN  
AND ANTRIM IN 1611.—*See p. 88.*

THE following is a further continuation of the Report of the Plantation Commissioners in 1611 (see p. 85). It is from the *Linkerton MSS.*, and pretty much confined to the neighbourhood of Belfast. Informing us of the origin or early history of well-known places, it should be thoroughly interesting to many persons.

THE TOWNE OF KNOCKFARGUS.

At Knockfargus we founde many masons and laborers at worke aboute the erection and buildinge of the walles of that towne and sunderye quarie men and laborers at worke aboute a quarter of a myle from the Towne in breakinge of rough stones for the workes.

We also founde 4 oxe teemes 2 horse teemes and many garrons w<sup>ch</sup> carres drawinge of stones and of other materialles for the same worke and we founde 4 lyme kills on fyre employed in burninge of lyme stone for the same.

And we weare advertised by Sr Fulke Conwayne and others that there are two quariemen w<sup>th</sup> other laborers employed continually in breakinge of lymestone aboute three myles from the Towne at a place called the White heade and that there weare likewise foure free masons w<sup>th</sup> other laborers aboute 40 myles from Knockfargus in breakinge and skaffoldinge of free stones for coynes for the Bullworkes and to face the wall 6 foote high all along the southe part of the Towne<sup>1</sup> by the sea syde wherein we fynde that great quantitie of free stone must be employede wh<sup>ch</sup> is gotten w<sup>th</sup> much difficultie because the boates cannot come

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<sup>1</sup> This is the proof of the place, and the manner in which was procured the freestone used in 1611 for the building of the walls and gates of Carrickfergus. It was at Cushendun, where at this day, and under the sea when the tide is out, freestone or red sandstone is still raised for many useful purposes. The following advertisement having reference to this subject is in the *News-Letter* in 1764 :—

“To be set or wrought, an excellent Free Stone Quarry situated on the Great Road leading from Carrickfergus to Belfast within a mile and a-half of the former—remarkable for its fine grain and whiteness, being formerly try’d and some Houses in Belfast finished with it.”

If this had been known in 1611, could it not have been used instead of going 40 miles away for stone?

It is said in the *Linkerton MSS.* that this building of the walls of Carrickfergus in 1611, as here mentioned, was unknown to Mr. Dobbs, who wrote about that place in 1683; or to Mr. M'Skimin, the historian of the town, whose work is so much more recent. Mr. M'Skimin mentions the yellowish colour of the stone at the corners of the bastions, but does not seem to know where it was obtained.—*History of Carrickfergus*, p. 110.

neere the place but in very calme wether and as wee weare enformed there have byne sundrie boates brocken and spoyled there since that worke begane and some tymes the boates are driven to Scotland and so disappointed of their freight w<sup>ch</sup> is a great impediment and hindrance to those workes.

We finde that the worke of the said walles and the bulworkes alreadie done containe in length 120 pearches every pearch containinge 21 foote and that the foundation doth contayne in thickness 8 foote.

We weare certified that the foundation is generally 4 foote deepe and in some other places 6 and 7 foote deepe and in 20 pearches thereof at least where the myle streames and uneven groundes and high wayes have byne are 16 foote deepe and in some places more.

The height of soe much of the walle as is now buylte from the grounde is in some places 7 foote and in some other 8 foote and the thicknes of the walle throughout and at the height thereof now buylte is 5 foote.

We also founde there a boate of 8 tonns w<sup>ch</sup> was bought ready made and likewise a barge of 15 tonns w<sup>ch</sup> was purposedie made for that worke and both of them are well furnished and continually employed in bringinge of lymestone freestone and other materielle for the said workes.

There is likewise goode store of coale ready provided for burninge of lyme.

W<sup>th</sup>in the said Towne the Lo. Deputie is in good forwardnes for the buyldinge of a fayre house and the inclosinge of a base courte and garden and a good quantitie of grounde for an orcharde.

The house courte and garden are w<sup>th</sup>in the walls of the towne and the orchard w<sup>th</sup>out the walls but adjoyneinge thereunto, all the foundation of the orchard is alreadie layd and a good parte of the wall thereof fully finished w<sup>ch</sup> is 9 foote high above the foundation and will be a good strength to the Towne on that syde.

The house consistes of three ranges of buildinge whereof one range that makes the fronte is in length 120 foote in bredth 24 foote and wilbe in height aboute 46 foote.

Th'other two ranges are to be of equall height w<sup>th</sup> the former and each of them 22 foote broade and 70 foot longe the front and one of th'other ranges are already buylte in height about 21 foote and all materielles for the whole excepte freestone for the wyndowes upper chimneyes and other uper workes are in good readines but the said stone is to be fetched w<sup>th</sup> much difficultie almost 40 myles from Knockfargus as is before mentioned w<sup>ch</sup> wilbe the sole impediment of that worke.

Adjoyneinge to this Towne the Kinge hath a fayre castle standinge in the mydle of a spatious courte compassed aboute with a high and stronge walle the Castle walle and lodgings w<sup>th</sup>in it are very ruynous and in decaye. It is a place of singulare importe and meete to be repayred w<sup>ch</sup> may be done by allowinge the companie geven to the Corporation of Knockfargus for a yeare after their peere and walls are finished w<sup>ch</sup> as a place worthy of his Mat<sup>ties</sup> supportation we humbly present to be considered of and for y<sup>e</sup> finishinge of y<sup>e</sup> said worke of



the Toure peere and Castle we conceive y<sup>t</sup> Companie wilbe yet a continuall charge to the King for two yeare longer.

Aboute a myle from Knockfargus on the North East syde in a place called Marshalstone where we sawe a good English house w<sup>th</sup> chimneys the walles made up latlie w<sup>th</sup> lyme and stone havinge a garden and a lawne trenched w<sup>th</sup> a deepe ditche and a stronge palle there upon and the most pte of the landes thereunto belonginge are inclosed w<sup>th</sup> ditches and in many places sett w<sup>th</sup> wyllowes w<sup>ch</sup> buyldinge and inclosiers weare likewise made by the said S<sup>r</sup> Arthur Chichester and are now leased by him unto one Baptist Johns an Englishman for many yeares yet to come.

W<sup>th</sup>in two myle of the Towne is a stone house buylte by Mr. Houstone the late Bishop of Downe at a place by the sea side called Kilroote and a stone wall aboute it 10 foote high repaired by the now Bishop.

Aboute two myles from thence by the sea syde upon the necke of the Iland Magye there hath byne latlie buylte by Moyses Hill some tyme lytent of the horse troope of S<sup>r</sup> Arthur Chichester and now provost Marshall of the government and tenant of the said S<sup>r</sup> Arthur Chichester a pritie castle now called Castle Chichester. That iland is well inhabited by English and Scotishmen and by other civill Irishmen such as for the most part can speake English and many of them doe goe in English habbitt.

One John Dobb buylte a fayre Castle w<sup>th</sup>in two myle of Knocfargus called Dobbs Castle about w<sup>ch</sup> he entendes to buylde a bawne of stone some Irish people of civill behaviour are planted there who made good houses after the manner of the palle. This Castle is buylte upon parte of Ensigne Dallawayes lande.

Not far from it we sawe a faire Bawne 15 foote high w<sup>th</sup> rounde flankers buylte by the said Dellawaye upon his owne lande at Brade Iland w<sup>th</sup>in w<sup>ch</sup> Bawne he hath erected a pritie house of tymber after the English manner tatched for the present but entended to be slated.

In o<sup>r</sup> travell from thence towards Massarene wee beheald materials sufficient to finish a faire Castle already buylte two stories high w<sup>th</sup> two great towers or flankers the worke of Humphery Norton Lieutenant of the Lo. Deputie's foote Companie at a place called Tymplepatricke upon the said S<sup>r</sup> Arthur Chichester's lande by the River of Sixmylewater he meanes to buylde a stronge bawne of lyme and stone aboute it towards w<sup>ch</sup> the s<sup>d</sup> S<sup>r</sup> Arthur geves £100 ster. and a lease of the landes for many yeares at a smale rente.

He hath drawne th'other sundrie famelies of English and some civill natives who have buylte them good tenem<sup>ts</sup> after the manner of the palle.

At Masserine there is a litle forte buylte in the midst of the Ryver some smale distance from the lough where are fayre tymber houses after the English manner buylte by Captaine Hugh Clotworthy covered over w<sup>th</sup> good shingle together w<sup>th</sup> necessarie houses to keepe his Maties stores of victualles and munition.

The forte is fenced w<sup>th</sup> a rampier of earthe and a stronge palisado rounde aboute it w<sup>th</sup> a deepe and broad ditch betweene hit and the mayne w<sup>th</sup> a draybridge over it.

There wee founde a barke of thirtie tonne and three or foure boates one of 14 tonnes and the rest of ten and eight and finding this place to be very usefull for y<sup>e</sup> K. upon all occasion of service both for defence of the boats and shippinge belonginge to that place and for the safe keeping of his Maties stores of victualles and munition to be transported into the centre of Tyrone and Armagh to relieve his Maties forces and garrisons there we have dealt w<sup>th</sup> the said Hugh Clotworthy to add some more buyldinges of defence unto the place w<sup>ch</sup> he hath undertaken upon o<sup>r</sup> promise of repaym<sup>t</sup> of his expences when he and his heirs are removed from the comand of it the some not exceeding foure hundred poundes.

W<sup>th</sup>in a myle of Masserine Captaine Roger Langford in his lyfe tyme did buyld a good stone house in a place called Muckmore w<sup>ch</sup> is a good strength and countenance to that parte of the countie.

There is a Castle and forte at Toome w<sup>th</sup> a stronge rampier of Earth buylte by the nowe Lo. Deputie in the tyme of Tyron's rebellion. It lies upon the intrance of the Bawne out of Lough Chichester upon a passable forde in somer between the counties of Tyrone and Antrim. S<sup>r</sup> Thomas Phillips hath a warde there from his Matie of two and twenty warders.

From thence we went to Dunluce where S<sup>r</sup> Randall M'Donell hath buylte a fayre stone walle aboute the whole rocke w<sup>th</sup>in w<sup>ch</sup> he hath erected a good house of stone w<sup>th</sup> many lodgings and other roomes.

The towne of Dunluce consists of many tenem<sup>ts</sup> after the fashion of the palle peopled for the most part w<sup>th</sup> Scottishmen.

His brother Nice M'Donell hath buylte a good newe stone house at Glanarme and S<sup>r</sup> Randall a good Castle at Redbaye.

#### THE COUNTIE OF DOWNE.

At Drommor-Enagh the auntient seat of the Bishop of that sea we founde a house of lyme and stone newlie repayrede and covered with shingle done by the nowe Bishop aboute w<sup>ch</sup> he hath begune a Rampier of Earth w<sup>th</sup> four flankers w<sup>ch</sup> he entendes as he tould us to finish for the defence and saftie of his house and famelie to w<sup>ch</sup> place sundrie inhabitants of British and Irish have resorted and have buylte them good ordinary tenements after the manner of the palle.

Captain Edward Trevo<sup>r</sup> hath all materialls ready for buyldinge of a Castle at Kilbrony in the countie of Downe w<sup>th</sup>in fyve myle of the Newrye.

S<sup>r</sup> James Hamylton Knight hath buylded a fayre stone house at the towne of Bangor in the upper Clandeboye w<sup>th</sup>in the Countie aforesaid about 60 foote longe and 22 foote broad the towne consistes of 80 newe houses all inhabited w<sup>th</sup> Scotyshmen and Englishmen And hath brought out of England 20 artificers who are makinge materialles of tymber bricke and stone for another house there.

The s<sup>d</sup> S<sup>r</sup> James Hamylton is p paringe to buyld another house at holly woode three mylles from Bangor and two hundred thowsand of bricke w<sup>th</sup> other materialles ready at the place where there are some 20 houses inhabited w<sup>th</sup> English and Scottes.

S<sup>r</sup> Hugh Mountgomery Knight hath repayred parte of the Abbey of Newtowne for his owne dwellinge and made a good towne of a hundred houses or thereabouts all peopled with Scottes.

Moyses Hill hath repayred Castle Reagh neere the foorde of Bealfast and made up the Bawne w<sup>th</sup> an addition of flankers.

In our travell from Dromore towards Knockfargus wee sawe in Killultagh upon S<sup>r</sup> Foulke Conways landes a house of Cadgworke in hand and almost finished where he entendes to errecte a Bawne of bricke in a place called Lisnagarwagh. He hath buylte a fayre tymber bridge over the river of Lagan neere the house.

The said S<sup>r</sup> Foulke hath buylt a fayre gate at the forte of Enisholaghlin in Killultagh where he entendes to buyld a good house he hath already at the place 150000 of bricke burnte w<sup>th</sup> other materialles.

He hath buylte another house of Cadgworke at a place called Moy-nargedell w<sup>th</sup> a stone bawne aboute it, w<sup>ch</sup> shalbe buylded 15 foote high.

#### NO. IV.—SOME NOTICES OF THE FAMILIES OF HILL AND RAWDON.—*See p. 90.*

THE list of the first twelve Burgesses has been transferred to Appendix No. XL, as being more appropriate. This appendix is entirely confined to notices of Hill and Rawdon, both intimately associated with Belfast. The accounts of these two families are chiefly from the *Pinkerton MSS.*—the statements within the inverted commas entirely so.

The principal person, it may be presumed, among the first Burgesses of Belfast was Sir Moses Hill, and the extent to which he was favoured by the Lord Deputy has been already told. It is unnecessary to say that from this Moses has sprung the family of the Marquis of Downshire. The connection both of Sir Moses Hill, and of his younger son, Arthur, the founder of the family, with Belfast, will justify these observations regarding them. It is but a moderate portion of what Mr. Pinkerton has written of them, and is here given in his own language :—

“Arthur Hill was the immediate founder of the large estates now enjoyed by the Downshire family, and the younger son of Moses Hill who built Strandmellis. Lodge, in his *Peerage of Ireland*—an immense and praiseworthy undertaking, the usefulness of which is partly destroyed by its gross inaccuracies, probably inseparable from such a work—tells us that a ‘Sir Robert Chichester nephew to Arthur Lord

Deputy being married to a daughter of this family (the Hills of Devonshire) we may reasonably presume that Moyse Hill, ancestor to the Earl of Hillsborough, was introduced into the kingdom by that noble lord in a military capacity, and was during the course of O'Neill's rebellion in the north, one of those gentlemen who, in 1573, were associated under Walter Devereux Earl of Essex, to suppress it." This is certainly a most incorrect passage, and Mr. Pinkerton, after other observations disproving it, says, "The ridiculous absurdity of the passage is rendered still more palpable when it is recollected that Sir Arthur Chichester, afterwards Lord Deputy, did not make his appearance in Ireland till 1599. Colonel Arthur Hill had command of a regiment of horse consisting of 600 men raised by Charles 1st in 1641 to serve against the rebels. After the kingdom had been compelled to submit to the Parliament he entered their service, and was appointed a Commissioner of Revenue for the Precinct of Belfast, and very ably fulfilled that duty, both under the Parliamentary and Protectorate Governments. The usurpers were not bad paymasters. In 1650 the Parliament granted Col. A. Hill 'in recompence of his many services in Ireland' the sum of £5000. Again, 1656, the Parliament 'in consideration of his many public and eminent services to the great furtherance and advancement of the public interest' granted him a further sum of £1000; they however added that it was to be 'a full satisfaction.' He sat in the same Parliament for the counties of Down, Antrim, and Armagh, a Parliament by the way the members of which were called and chosen by Cromwell alone to represent the three kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland. Moreover, in the same year, the Protector and his Council, by letters dated Whitehall, 29th of April, granted him in trust for his younger son Arthur about 3000 acres of profitable land, with some wood and bog in the territory of Kilwarlin in the County of Down. And Colonel Hill being previously seized of divers other lands in that territory they were all erected into the manor of Hillsborough and Growde. . . . One would reasonably have supposed that those lands at least would have been taken from him at the Restoration; but that was not the way affairs were managed then, though they were lands forfeited by men, who, as they said, fought for their king against the zealots who put him to death."

Sir George Rawdon is deserving of remembrance for his companionship with Hill, and because he was in 1639 one of our Parliamentary representatives, and also one of the Commissioners of the Revenue for Belfast Precinct. He was almost a Belfast man, in fact, and one of the most talented, useful, and enterprising persons of the day over and beyond his public services, both civil and military.

"Major Rawdon was a native of Yorkshire; he came to Ireland as agent for the Lisburn estates of Lord Conway, and was major of the regiment of horse raised by that nobleman in 1641. He was member of Parliament for Belfast in 1639, and when the Parliament succeeded in subduing Ireland he was one of the Commissioners of Revenue

for the Precinct of Belfast, both under them and the Protectorate. After Cromwell died, he prudently turned towards the rising sun of the Restoration, and in 1660 was appointed one of the Commissioners for executing his Majesty's Declaration for the Settlement of Ireland. In 1665 he was created a Baronet of England under the title of Moira in the County of Down. Not a syllable of his service to the usurpers is hinted in the accurate Peerage book, but it says that, 'as he had the strongest disposition to be as useful as possible to his country, so he had an ample fortune which enabled him to show it, whereby he gained the greatest respect and esteem.' He does not seem to have been so lucky under the Protectorate as his brother commissioner Colonel Hill; though he performed his duty well and ably he does not appear to have received any more than the mere salary of his office. But at the Restoration he received many grants under the different Acts of Settlement, in the counties of Down, Dublin, Louth, and Meath; 'and for the sum of £200 was allowed to pass patent of 2078 acres in the Barony of Upper Iveagh in the County of Down.'

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NO. V.—THE WILL, THE LIKENESS, THE GENEALOGY OF LORD DEPUTY SIR ARTHUR CHICHESTER, BARON OF BELFAST, AND SOME OTHER NOTICES OF HIM.—*See p. 92.*

SIR ARTHUR CHICHESTER, after his labours connected with the Plantation of Ulster, was relieved from his cares as Chief Governor in 1615, but was made by the King, of whom he was one of the most esteemed and trusty servants, Lord High Treasurer of Ireland. Frequent were his visits to the Court to advise on Irish affairs; and in 1622 he was sent ambassador to the Palatinate, when, being besieged by the famous Tilly in Manheim, who disregarded his remonstrance of the immunity due by the law of nations to his office, he retorted on him by the reply "that if his master had sent him with as many hundred men as he had sent him with fruitless messages, Count Tilly should have known that he was a General as well as an Ambassador."

The following are a few quotations from the paper addressed by the Lord Deputy Chichester to King James:—

"Having bin your Maties Deputie of that Kingdome, now full nine yerres and three months (a grace seldom don to men of that place by yor Predecessors) I am bounde, in testimonie of the care I have had of yor service there and discharge of the trust so reposed in me, to laie down the state of that Realme as I found it; the remedies I gave to the enormities thereof; the present condition of the affaires there;

GERTRUDE, DAUGHTER OF SIR  
COURTENAY OF POWDERHAM CA

EDWARD 2<sup>ND</sup> SON  
CREATED VISCOUNT CA  
APL. 1<sup>ST</sup> 1625, DIED  
SQUIRE

Y, LETITIA JOHN  
THE DAUGHTER OF BORN  
ISTOL SIR W<sup>M</sup> HICKS DIED  
E. 3<sup>RD</sup> WIFE.

IGREE

THE

ER FAMILY.

H, DAUGHTER CHARLES. JAN  
CHICHESTER. BARR

MARY. ANNE = EARL

HTER OF  
OFREY,  
R 1790,  
BER 1829,

DAUGHTER CHARLOTTE  
EARL BORN 1762.  
WAY.

AUGUSTUS ARTHUR  
NOV<sup>R</sup> 1805 BORN 30<sup>TH</sup> SEP<sup>R</sup> 1801



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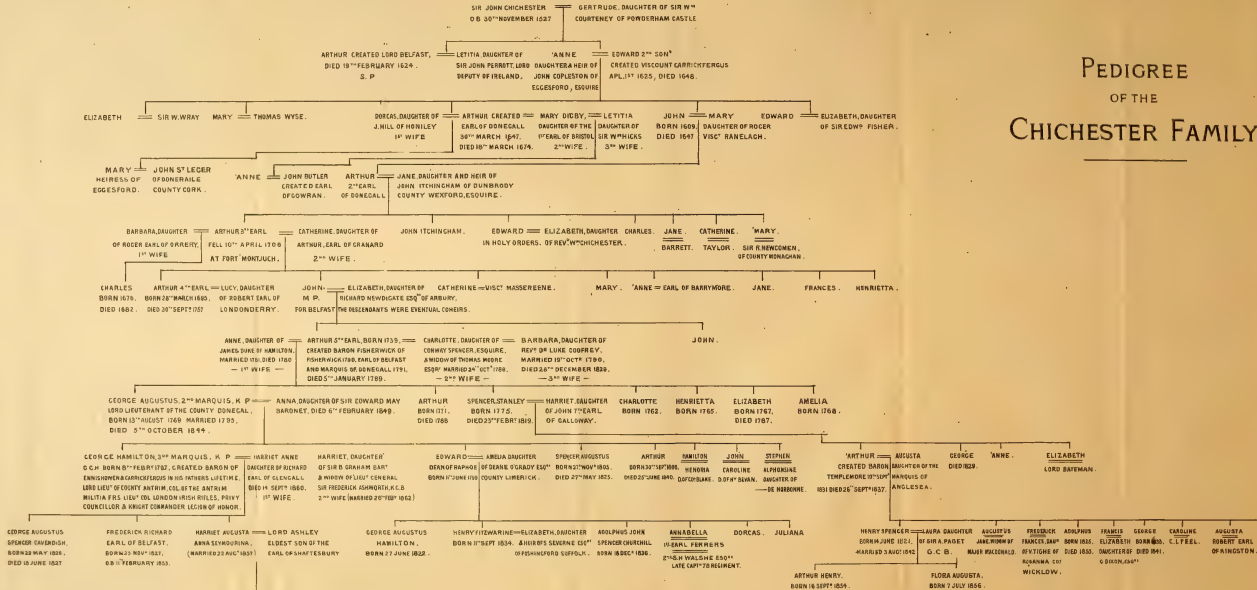
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# PEDIGREE OF THE CHICHESTER FAMILY.





and, lastlie, myne opinion for the better reformation and hopefull settlement of the future peace and welfare of that Realme.

"I came into the government when a longe and bloodie warre had destroyed the greater parte of the people, and lefte manie partes of the Kingdom in a manner wast. The remnant then alive were for the most parte so fearfull to be called to an account for their ill demerits, that they abandoned all good societies; the Cities and Townes had carried themselves so contemptuously upon y<sup>e</sup> death of y<sup>e</sup> late Quene, that they were doubtfull of their owne saffeties, and all the people who had bin transported with disloialtie and malice towards the State were diversely distracted and amazed, beinge conscious of their owne guilt, and affraid of their owne shadowes no lesse than one of another.

"To free them of those juste feares, and to settle them againe in their former vocations, and specially to the manurance of the lande, which had longe laine wast by devastacion of the warres, I procured from your Matie a generall pardon of all offences comited before yor succession to the crowne, w<sup>ch</sup> was accordinglie proclaimed and joyfullie accepted by all men. And this hath bin a principal motive of the peace ensuinge unto this time.

"I found by former experience that the makinge of the Irish Lordes and Gentlemen, under the great seale, Captaines and Chieftaines of their septes and contreys, to which they pretended a right by course of Irish Tanistrie, did cause not onlie intollerable oppressions of your Maties subjects (who lived on condition of slaves and vassals under them, and made their sole dependance upon those Idoll Lordes) but caused also manie sinister ambitions to be practized, and unnaturall murthers to be comitted upon their owne neer kindred. In consideration of all which mischiefs and inconveniences and for remedie thereof, I did whollie resolve to make no such grauntes in my time, though it had bin an anciente Custome of all former governors, and have bin verie profitable unto me, if I had preferred myne owne private gaine before your Maties service and good of the Comon Welthe. This custom is yet allowable, at this daie, by a statute in that Realme inacted, w<sup>ch</sup> I wish to be againe repealed and abolished by a new acte.

"I have caused many of the Chieftaines and pretending Lordes to surrender their Landes and Titles, and to take new Estates by lettres patentes from your Matie and have reduced their uncertaine cuttings and cosheries, liveries, and other like Irish exactions and extortiones, into rentes certaine, and to make many freeholders under them accordinge to the course of the Comon Law and custome of England, whereby yor Matie shall be better served in Sises or Sessions, or as the policie of the government doth necessarilie require; the exorbitant greatnesse and dependencie upon the hye to be cutt of, and the inferior sorte to be masters of their owne."

The article proceeds to recount all the services of Lord Chichester, in making plantations, shire ground, reformation of religion, and other public affairs in Ireland of which he was the planner and performer.

It is true the eulogium is in his own words; but there were two poems written on his death, one of which only was printed in 1625, and re-published in 1643, "proving that Chichester was a man not readily forgotten." This printed poem, written by his chaplain, the Reverend Alexander Spicer, relates that Lord Chichester had been educated at Oxford; was knighted on the field of battle by Henry the Fourth of France; had been a famous captain at sea as well as by land, having performed many valiant actions with Drake and others. He came to Ireland with the Earl of Essex, was first distinguished in 1599; and let his memory be condemned as it may by modern writers, he was one of the greatest and most energetic chief governors Ireland ever possessed.<sup>1</sup>

The following is the account by Captain Phillips of one of Sir Arthur Chichester's earliest exploits near Belfast:—

*Extract—Capt. Thomas Phillips to Cecil, dated Carrickfergus,  
7th July, 1601.*

. . . since his Lo. hathe don me a great fauour to send me to this place vnder so wordie a man as Sr Artor Chichister whos trew affecion I find to be great twoardes your ho. your ho. shall vnderstand that yesterday morninge he went & beseaged Castell Reoa a place of great importance for this countrie and standes som 11 milles from this town, he toke it withe y<sup>e</sup> losse of verie few men and came hom the same night, whiche was against the expectacion of the Enemie, for at midnight brian M'Cartie had promised to releaue them withe all his forces and the healpe of terron [Tyron], I assure your ho. to parform suche enterprisses as he dothe he is slenderly provided, for to take in this Castell he had nott anie toules but what he comaunded to be mad himselfe, he is now yppon departeur to the Loathe [Lough Neagh] whear he makes prouicion of boates to pas ouer into terron, I know he hathe written to your ho. the particulars of all thinges. . . .

#### WILL OF LORD DEPUTY CHICHESTER.

In the name of the blessed Trinity, three persons and one Almighty ever living God to whom be all glory and praise for ever and ever Amen,—Forasmuch as every Creature who had a beginning must have an end and we who live must die and return to the Earth from whence we came It behoves us so to dispose and settle our worldly affairs in

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<sup>1</sup> The above is an extract from the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. ix., p. 183. The article contains Spicer's poem concerning the Lord Deputy, states that he was present at a commencement in Trinity College, is headed by a *fac-simile* of his miniature copied from the original in the British Museum, and contains a lengthened account of his funeral. The effigy or picture is here copied, but the account of the funeral being already in print it is unnecessary to reproduce it. The entire article was compiled by Mr. Pinkerton.



*The Right Hon<sup>ble</sup> Right Wise and Valiant ARTHUR LO CHICHESTER,*

*LO. Baron of Belfast, Lo. High Treasurer of Ireland, and sometimes*

*Lo. Deputy of that Kingdom a 11 years & upward.*

*One of the Privy Counsell in ENGLAND.*

*The above Inscription is round the Oval of the Original.*





the days of our health and strength of body and mind, as to be ready for the hour and time that God by death shall separate our ever living souls from our mortal bodies, without being distracted with the cares of what we must leave behind us to others—out of the like considerations I am at this time moved to make this my last will and testament, and do hereby declare it to be my last will and testament under my hand and seal.

First, I render up my soul to God who gave it trusting and confidently believing that by the passion, blood shedding, and death of Jesus Christ my Saviour all my sins and offences are washed away and forgiven and by his resurrection and intercession I am made righteous in the sight of Almighty God, before whom I assuredly believe in him and by him so to appear and this life ended I shall have the full and perfect fruition of almighty glory with the holy angels and ever living Saints and blessed Martyrs in that place of Happiness which God hath appointed for his Elect. My will and desire is, that it may be done, that my body be buried by my late dear wife in the Aisle of the Church of Knockfargus, which I have prepared for that purpose and that my little son Arthur who lies buried in Christ Church Dublin be removed thither and that my brother John Chichester who lies likewise buried in the said Church of Knockfargus be likewise removed and laid in the same vault, if I do it not in my life time, and for my funeral I will not have it otherwise expencefull but decent and convenient, the place considered which is so remote that no notice will be taken of these ceremonies. If any money be owing by me at the time of my death by bond, bill, or other speciality to any man, or that it be proved or that it shall appear that I am indebted to any man, my will and desire is that they be truly and speedily paid, out of my money and goods, which I shall leave behind me.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my nephew Sir Robert Chichester, if he be alive at the time of my death, my gold cup with the cover, if he die before me then I do give it to my niece Ann his daughter.

Item. I do give and bequeath to my nephews Sir Arthur Bassett, Sir Faithful Fortescue and Francis Basset to each of them two hundred pounds English, that shall be then alive, at the day of my death. I give and bequeath to my brother Lairs Pollart a fair gilt bason and ewer. To my nephew Arthur Hache the like. To John *alias* Chichester the reputed son of my brother Sir John Chichester thirty pounds sterling a year during his life, and to Charles Chichester who serves me twenty pounds like money during his life, to be paid unto them out of the fifty pounds payable to me by Sir Moses Hill Knight out of Kilwarnan.

Item. I give and bequeath to my kinsman Henry Upton a lease of two townlands of the four which I past to Humphrey Johnston, and now in the tenure of Sir Hercules Lanford Knight at the yearly rent of four pounds a year for the said towns the lease to be to him and his wife and his first son that shall live untill he comes to the age of six years, his lease to commence upon the expiration of the lease now in being to the said Johnston and untill the tenements come to his hands he shall have twenty pounds paid him yearly by my heirs.

Item. I do give a town land, one of the two remaining undisposed of the four leased to Humphrey Johnston and his assigns to Henry Holdmead to be past unto him his wife and his son Faithful during their lives and the longer liver of them, at the yearly rent of forty shilling a year and until the lease now in being shall expire, he is to have the pay of one of the nine horsemen allowed me without check, during the life of Arthur Chichester and Arthur Lougharne, which pay being eighteen pounds, five shillings a year or thereabouts, my heirs shall increase to twenty pounds by the year.

Item. I give and bequeath to my boy Arthur Denham, the other of those four towns let unto Humphrey Johnston for his own, his wife, and his first son's wife, at the yearly rent of forty shillings, and until that comes into his hands by the expiration of the said lease now in being he shall have ten pounds a year paid him by my heir. I give unto Thina Tanner towards his preferment fifty pounds and to the little wench Peggy Barrett a hundred marks to be paid when she shall marry with the consent of my heirs, or when she shall attain to eighteen years old. I give and bequeath to every of my servants, who are serving me at the day of my death, a year's wages over and above what shall be due unto them, if any be at that time. Whereas, I have the pay of nine horsemen at twelve pence sterling a piece during the life of the two boys Arthur Chichester and Arthur Lougharne and four shillings two pence like money for myself as Captain, I give and bequeath unto Sir Thomas Hibbotts, the said Captain's pay during his life, if the boys die before him, then he shall have an hundred marks sterling, by way of pension yearly, out of any lands of Inishone and the pay of the horsemen all but that given to Henry Upton and Henry Holdmead I leave to my heir to dispose off upon such servants as shall attend him after my death.

Item. I give and bequeath unto Arthur Lougharn, my late wife's grandchild a thousand pounds if I purchase not lands for him in my life time as I have promised, and I give and bequeath to my nephew Arthur Chichester, the son of my brother Sir Edward Chichester, all my castles, houses, lands, tenements, and mills, fairs and markets and all whatsoever else I hold in the farm from his Majesty or by lease from the Lord Arch Bishop of Armagh, within the County of Tyrone, namely the town, castle and manor of Dongannon &c. to hold to him and his heirs and his heirs male for ever.

Item. I give and bequeath unto my dear and well-beloved brother Sir Edward Chichester, to his heirs males for ever, all my other houses, castles, lands, tenements, rents, commodities, and emoluments whatsoever within the counties of Carrickfergus, Antrim, Londonderry, Down, and Donegall, within the realm of Ireland, together with my house known by the name of Chichester House near Dublin, and also I bequeath and give to my said brother all my houses, castles, lands, tenements, and all whatsoever is mine in the town of Camerthin, and in the county of Camerthin in South Wales, if I sell it not or otherwise dispose not of it by deed or conveyance in my life time, and further I make, ordain, constitute, and appoint him my said brother to be my sole executor and do give and bequeath unto him all my

money, jewels, plate, household stuff, goods, chattels, and moveables whatsoever, which I shall leave behind me undisposed of at the day of my death, and I pray and conjure him, by the love I bear to him, to confirm and make good all deeds, leases, and gifts past by me and to be past by me when he sees my hand and seal, and what is contained in this my last will and testament, about which there may be error or defect in the giving or passing of them by strictness of law, of which I charge him not to take any advantage as he will enjoy my blessing, and I pray him furthermore to present to such of my noble friends and ancient acquaintances with some token of my love and remembrance of them in plate, horses, or the like, in which my noble friend Sir Foulke Conway, Sir Thomas Hibbotts, Sir Moses Hill, and Hugh Clotworthy, and Humphrey Norton are to be remembered, and I make constitute and appoint my well beloved Sir Thomas Hibbotts Knight, Chancellor of the Exchequer, to be the overseer of this my last will and testament whom I pray to see the same duly and justly performed in all points, and I pray my brother and heir to be advised by him and to love him whom I have ever found honest and careful of me and my estate.

I declare this to be my last will and testament, witness my hand and seal hereunto affixed, the twenty ninth of October one thousand six hundred and twenty one.

ARTHUR CHICHESTER.

Sealed and delivered in presence of us.

HENRY UPTON.

CHARLES CHICHESTER.

SAMUEL SMITH.

ARTHUR DENHAM.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Many of the names mentioned in the will of the Lord Deputy have been already noticed. Sir Robert Chichester was son of his elder brother, Sir John Chichester. The Bassetts were his nephews, being the children of his sister Eleanor, in which relationship Sir Faithful Fortescue and Arthur Hatch also stood, being the sons of other sisters. He calls "Lairs Pollart" his brother. This cannot be well understood. At that time the degrees of relationship were very indefinitely or incorrectly expressed. Dorothy, one of Sir Arthur's numerous sisters, was married to Sir Hugh Pollard (Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. i., p. 317). If he had said *Hugh* Pollart it would have been easy of explanation. *Thina* and *Lairs* are singular names; but both are in the will as copied.

Of the two boys, Arthur Chichester and Arthur Lougharne, the latter was the grandson of his wife, Letitia Perrot, who had been married previously to Vaughan Blackham, Esq. The Lord Deputy was very liberal to him; he calls him sometimes his son. Arthur Chichester was the eldest son of his brother Edward. He was born in 1606, and was therefore fifteen years old when this will was made.

The friendship of the Lord Deputy to Conway, Hibbotts, Hill, Clotworthy, Norton, and others is fully exemplified in the language which he uses regarding them.

This will is in the Record Office, Dublin, but was written from a copy got by Mr. Pinkerton probably elsewhere.

No. VI.—ACCOUNT OF AN EXPEDITION TO CHARLEMONT AT THE TIME OF THE CIVIL WARS BY THE ENGLISH AND SCOTCH FORCES.—*See p. 101.*

A FEW papers having relation to the Rebellion of 1641, and the war in different parts of Ulster which followed it, are included in the *Pinkerton MSS.* An example of one is inserted in this Appendix. No reference is made as to the source from which it was obtained, and its perfect originality cannot be vouched for. It details at some length the proceedings of a strong detachment of Scotch which left Carrickfergus in September, 1642, and uniting with the English troops collected from Malone, Belfast, and other places, proceeded into the heart of the country “to meet Sir Phelim O’Neill at Charlemont or wherever he was to be found.” Belfast is not so much connected with the affair as some other places, except indirectly; but the whole narrative, if never printed before, is a valuable addition to the history of the eventful era of 1641, and even if partially known is worthy of republication.

“1642. Upon the 16<sup>th</sup> of June Generall Maior Monke marched, with above 2000 foote, being commanded men without coloures, from Carrick Fergus within a mile of Lisnegarvie; and the same night with the Lord Montgomerye, with 700 foote and 3 Troopes of light Horse, and above 400 of the Lo: Claneboye’s foote, and a Troope of Horse, were come before and quartered between the Gennerall Maiors men and the Town; and the Lord Conwaie came that daie from Belfast with 5 Troopes of Horse to Lisnegarvie, where his Regiment laie, intending to goe the next morning with the Armie; But his Lo<sup>rp</sup>, being but newly recovered out of a long illness, and not having soe much as walked out into the ayre before that time, tooke cold and the next morning being sicke in his bedd, his Lo<sup>rp</sup> sent to the Lo: Montgomerie and after halfe an houre’s private discourse, by advice the forces were divided, and marched towards the Bandside by two severall wayes; the Generall Maior with his owne foote and all the Horse, except one Troope, tooke the waye of Dromore and through the Plaines, and the rest with 500 of Lo: Conwayes foot, 100 of Capt<sup>n</sup> Chichester’s, and all the Lord Montgomeryes, and the Lo: Claneboye’s foot, and a Troope of 60 Dragouners commanded by Capt<sup>n</sup> Rawden, marched through Killylutta, to cleare the woodes, where they found greater difficultye and paines in throwing downe severall Breast works the Rebelles had made att diverse passes, and in makeing upp the Bridges, than in Beating the Enemie awaie, for uppon Noyse of the Armie comeing out, they quite there workes and retyred with all there Catle and goods over the

Band, Burning the Countrie all along, and onelye in one place neare the Lurgoon at a great Bogge Some Muskiteres were left to play upon our men, through severall holes they had made in a Breast worke at a great Bogge, which with two wings of 100 Musketiers a peece were quicklie beaten off, and they put to save themselves by running. Our men came verye late that night to their quarters upon the Band at Knockbridge, where some of the Rebelles were cutting the Bridge, But the Dragouners which were in the Van alighted, (and the ground on this side being a deepe Marish, and the Causey all broken) and beat them from their worke and chased the Rebelles from the other side, and brought over above 20 of there Cowes and some mares. The Generall Maior came that same night to Tullielishe neare the Bandside, above a mile above the Knocke, but wee came soe late that wee could not perceiue his forces, or be ascertained of his being there; soe that Capt<sup>n</sup> Rawden was sent verie earlye the next morning to finde out the General Maior's Quarter, and to acquaint him that the Lord Montgomerie and there forces were at Knockbridge, and attended his direction and advice what was to be done.

“That daie the Generall Maior, after some time of Consideration, resolved not to march over the Band with his forces, haveing received intelligence that the Rebelles were all fledd into the woods and mountaines beyond Dungannon which was farr, and they unprovided of Victuall for soe long a march, thought it fitter for him to returne by the mountaines of Morne and M'Cartan's Woodes, where it was liklye some of the Rebelles and there goods were harboured, (for in the former dayes march he found none of them in Kilwarlin woods) by which waie allsoe he should understand the state of the Garrison at Newrie, being to goe neare it; and soe he tooke with him 5 Troopes which was the Lo: Conwaie's, Lord Cromwell's, Major Mathews', Capt<sup>n</sup> Upton's and Capt<sup>n</sup> Trevor's; and sent the Lo: Montgomerie's, Lo: Claneboye's parte of the Lo: Grandisonne's, and Colonel Hill's Troopes, comonly called Capt<sup>n</sup> Windsor's back, with Capt<sup>n</sup> Rawden to Foyne, with the Lord Montgomerie and the forces with him, whom he left to their owne Counsell, to take what waie they should find fittest for the advantage of the service, and cutting of the Rebelles, that they being almost spent before their Horse arrived at the Knocke. Upon notice of the Generall Maior's resolution, after a little debate it was agreed that all the Horse should immediatlye be sent over the Band at a troublesome foord before the broken bridge, to discover as farr towards Ardmagh or Lohgall as they Could, and to returne at night; and upon there returne and intelligence, it should bee resolved whether the foote should passe the River or retreat. That daie proved very successfull; the Horse marched 6 miles, and overtooke 300 Cowes, which the Enemie was driveing awaie, and killed diverse of the Rebelles, and tooke a Preist Chanter of Ardmagh, and a principall Counsellor to Sr Phelomie O'Neale, who was since hanged, But would not confesse or discover any thing. The next morning with great difficultye and much time spent, the armie and the Baggage passed the River, and a great Bogg neare the foord, and all the Horse except a partie of 32 which were sent to discover about Charlemont.



“Marched directlye to Ardmagh, where they rested an houre ; and by some Intelligence by some English, that had escaped from their thrall-dome, uppon the Enemie's flight, that there was no Garrison in the Towne of Kinnard, and few men in Sr Phelomie O'Neale's Howse, and that Sr Philomie himself was newlye returned from Tircconnell, where he receaved a great defeat, and that there were manie prisoners there both of English and of Scotts. : The Horse marched with all speed to Kinnard, where without anie great difficultie they tooke the Towne, and also Sr Philomie O'Neale's Howse, which was built of Freestone, and strong enough to have kept out all the force wee could make. The Inhabitants were runn out of Towne, and had taken all there goods that were portable ; and for haste had not killed anie prisoners, who had wellcomed us kindlye uppon their knees, and looked liked soe manie Ghostes, there faces and apparell speaking their Condition ; and Capt<sup>n</sup> Rawden, hearing from one of them that the ladie Cawfeild and her children and diverse others were kept at a Stone House neare the Browntree (? Brentur) woods where the Enemie lay, immediately marched thither with his troope and found her at the doore and her children and others readie to be carried awaie towards the woods, with the Rebelles, who had sent both there goods and there owne before. But they immediatelye fledd, being well-horsed, and ours wearie, and left her, and so she and the Companie were brought awaie in Safetie, and some of the goods recovered by a partie sent after them that night. The Horsemen stood all in armes, and sent back to Ardmagh (which was 6 miles off) to the Armie for 300 Musketiers, who came verie earlye under the command of Lieut<sup>nt</sup> Colonell Hamletonn. The Ladie Cawfeild and the prisoners of the best sort lay in Sr Phelomie O'Neale's House that night, where there was good store of Household Stuffe, and some plate ; But the best parte of it were uppon waines at the arrival of the Horse, which were driven the next daie, then was intended (back to Ardmagh).

“After the House was pillaged, and the new drinke fownde in the Towne drunke upp, the Soaldiers burnt the Towne and Sr Philemie his House, and marched back with above 200 poore prissoners towards the armie at Ardmagh, during this action the Rebelles lay within 3 miles in great numbers, as wee were certainly informed by diverse rogues that were killed about the Towne, and we saw, of their Horse. Skoutes on severall hills, yet they attempted not soe much as to give us an allarum. Uppon Tuesdaie morning the Horse and foote marched from Ardmagh towards Charlemont, where Sr Phelemie himselfe was, and Colonell Con O'Neale, and O'Cane, being the place of their greatest confidence, and where they have made a strong and handsome trench about the Towne, and have a Strong Castle and 2 peeces of Ordinance. Att Blackwater above a mile from the Towne, Sr Phelemie himselfe had been above a quarter of an houre before our comeing, and layd a 100 Muskitiers in a strong breast worke to defend a foord over the River, neare the Place where Tyrone gave the defeat to Bagnoll ; uppon which our fore Troope of 150 Musketiers commanded by Capt<sup>n</sup> James played a night, but without any harme to the Enemie ; yet hereuppon the greatest parte of them quitt the worke, and about 20 or 30 of the

best men and most of them Gentlemen defended it gallantly, untill the Horse plunged through a deep foord and charged them within the worke, there being a waie to enter above it, where every man of the 20 or 30 were Slaine, and no hurt on oure side, save that Maior Crawford and Capt<sup>n</sup> Rawden's horses were shott in the pursuite of those that fledd our horse, and came verie neare Sr Phelomie himselfe; if they had knowne it, he would not have eskaped, for he fledd towards Dungannon with not above 2 or 3 in his Companie; he could not retire unto Charlemont, because some of our men were gone between him and the Place. Presentlye after about 12 of the Clocke, wee marched on towards Charlemont, which was long a doing in respect of a Caussey and bridge that they had broken which was long a-mending. Att our Arrivall neare the Towne, the Commander of the fore Troope by order of the Lord Montgomerie summoned the Rebelles to deliver upp the Towne and Castle, Otherwise to expect no quarter for man woman or child. They alledged they kept it for the King, and desyred time till the next day, being Thursday at One of the Clocke, which was denyed, his Lo<sup>rp</sup> beleiving that in that time they expected ayd or would provide the Castle of victualles out of the Towne; and wee could not hold a long Siege, being unprovided both of victualles and ammunition; bread we had none at home to bringe out, and having no monney to doe any thing; if our Store had been greter, Carriage was verie hard to be gotten, Soe that it was resolved to fall upp on there trenches that night and to that purpose longe faggotts were presentlye made, and in the twilight foure parties were sent out, who filled upp the trenches and assaulted the Towne in foure places, and gott over without any difficultye, the most parte of the Rebelles having quitt them, and fyred the Towne and runne into the Castle before our men could gett over to them. Our men laid in the trenches, and about the Castle all night; and by daise Shott at the windows without any great harme on either side. The next daie being Weddensdaie verie earlye advertizement came from Sr William Brumley, a Prisoner in Dungannon, for that he and Lieut<sup>nt</sup> Martin, and some others there, Seeing our tents 5 miles from them at Charlemont, took a resolution to endeavour their owne freedome, and that night joyned together, and with the helpe of some Irish that had formerly had relacon to them seized upon the Capt<sup>n</sup> and became masters of the forte, whereupon the Lord Montgomerie, with all the Horse and a good parte of Musquitiars, marched immediately to Dungannon with great care and wariness, least this had bene a tricke of the Rebelles to force this letter from Sr William; but it was found reall, and the Castle deluded, and upon debate it was resolved to leave a Garrison of 100 men, and to hange the former Capt<sup>n</sup> and his men; and Capt<sup>n</sup> Jones, a Capt<sup>n</sup> in the Lord Conwaie's Regiment, thought one as verie fitt to command there, and had left with him 80 foote of his Companie and a squadron of Capt<sup>n</sup> Rawden's Horse, and other more to mount more of his foote upon occasion. Having intelligence there, that the Ladie Blaynie was kept in the woods 4 miles from Monnaghan, which is burned, all the Horse were sent immediately towards Monnaghan; they marched all night, there way was through Kinnard, where

nothing was left quicke, but some angrie dogges and Embers, and after daie breake thy came through Monnaghan, and being soe farr in the Rebelles cuntrye soe suddenly, they killed about 100 men they found in there way, but the good Ladie was removed further into the woods the night before, and the Countrey were drawing together uppon another occasion to meet S<sup>r</sup> Phelomie O'Neale, to consider of making head againe our armie; soe after we lighted on about 1500 Cowes and manie mares and releevd verie manie prissoners, and alsoe tooke 40 or 60 men that came to scout and discover about Monnaghan, and mett Capt<sup>n</sup> Barnett's Horse from whome Capt<sup>n</sup> Dillon, that commanded Capt<sup>n</sup> Chichester's Troope, brought much preyes & diversse prisoners, and the Horse marched backe to Charlemonte with their prey and arrived there safe at night, after a long march of neare 60 miles in 2 dayes and a night. In the forte of Dungannon was found a brasse peece of Ordinance, which carries between 4 or 5<sup>th</sup> bullett, which the Lord Montgomerie brought backe with his foot to Charlemont, with one of S<sup>r</sup> Philomie's O'Neale's Teames taken at Kinnard, and with it made 3 Shott but with little harme to the Castle, which the Lord Montgomerie perceaveing and that some of the Rebelles appeared by a wood-side, and not knowing but the Horse being absent they might gett between him and them, & being altogether unable to lye there haveing no more victualles or ammunition, therefore was requisite to march home, So they retreated to Blackwater over that broken passe and there stayed till the Horse returned on Thursday night.

The next day Capt<sup>n</sup> Rawden was sent with a partie of Horse backe to Dungannon, with ammunition and a 100 Cowes, and as much provision of Corne and meale as could bee gotten in the Howses and created thereabout.

And the armie marched to Ardmagh whither they came late that night and brought one Mr. Stewart, whose mother was Sister to the Earle of Tirone, and who had bene all this time with the Rebelles. and that morning Capt<sup>n</sup> M'Connell, who had burned Dungannon the day before the fort was taken, was killed neare the Towne by the Corporall who commanded the 20 Horse left with Capt<sup>n</sup> Jones. On Saturday the armie marched from Ardmagh to Knockbrickland, and the next day to Lisnegarvie, where the Cattle was divided among the Souldiours (all that was left unstollen and untaken) which was everie 4 of the foote one, and one to everie 2 of the Horsemen.

The preceding is rather an interesting narrative of the '41 wars, though confused. The account of the Ladies Caulfield and Blaney is most probably quite original. The "New Drinke" was doubtless beer, not yet matured for use. The soldiers found it acceptable enough after such long marching and countermarching, so "drunke it uppe" on speculation.

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The following original letters, written by Sir Arthur Chichester from Carrickfergus in 1601, disclose the history of the time. They

were accidentally omitted after the letter which relates Sir Arthur's taking of Castlereagh (p. 682), of which they form a continuation. They are of the period near the close of Tyrone's wars, and mention many well-known historical facts, as well as Sir Arthur's private opinions and wishes. He does not appear in 1601 to have possessed Carrickfergus, much less Belfast, except as military commander; and it is a pity he does not say something more explicit about the latter, which was so near him. The first letter was written the day after he took Castlereagh, as described in the foregoing one of Captain Phillips. He alludes to the event, and mentions his actions in many places not very far distant.

Great doubts were felt about the propriety of inserting these letters even in an Appendix; but on consideration, as they have never been in print before, but have been obtained direct from the Public Record Office in London—as they concern the fortunes of the founder of Belfast before his career was very far advanced, and as they really detail the events of the war, and how it was carried on in 1601, their insertion here will doubtless be deemed satisfactory to many readers.

*Sir Arthur Chichester to [the Council], 8th July, 1601.*

RIGHT HONORABLE,

I haue byne backward since my comminge from you in geuinge aduertismentes for two causes: first for that beinge lodged in so priuate a place under the commande of so noble a generall as the lorde Deputie, I thought your honors expected not anie aduertismentes of my doinges but such as shoulde come from his Lordshipe after I hade imparted them unto him; The seconde proceeded from distrust lesse your honors woulde iudge me Idle in writinge so priuate proceedings to so great a Counsell, but havinge nowe rune thorowe much of the business of this gouernment I hope to be pardoned in yeeldinge an accompt of my trauels. Att my retourne to this place I founde all the people more violent traytors then I hade formerly knowen them, such as serued w<sup>t</sup> me att my departure were nowe against me, all the Castles and strenths of the Countrie (but the Castle of Belfast) in their possessions, the queenes forces lestned by exchange of Companies and more weakned by the exchange, so that I was diuersly distracted, and had often in thought to seue for more assystance (w<sup>ch</sup> I did) and that not afforded me by reason of the manie troubles and employmentes in other parts of the kyngdome. I shoulde haue used all meanes to haue w<sup>d</sup>drawne myselfe from so daungerous a warre both for leife and reputation, had not the generall and perticulare fauours receaued both from her maiestie and your honors at my beinge in Englande commanded me to aduenture w<sup>t</sup> the force I hade, hopinge that whatsoever shoulde followe (endeuoringe my best) I shoulde haue your honors fauorable censures, and assystance from that noble Lorde when he coulde spare them; so callinge ourselues togeather

then in lyst 600 foote and 125 horse (of w<sup>ch</sup> numbers your lordships knows us to be fore shorte in strenth and abylyties for service) w<sup>t</sup> the assystants of Sr Foulke Conwayne and Capt. John Jephsonne two uerie gallant and worthie Cap<sup>ts</sup>. I endeoured upon thenimie by often paynfull and busieorneyes, and albeyt they were att that tyme three tymes our numbers diuersly dispersed into seuerall partes of the gouernment, wee did so vex and trouble them, that most of the naturall inhabytantes begane to be wearie of such daungers. This emboldened me to aduenture some plantations in the Countreys: one at Hollywoode in the vpper Clondeboyne, the other att Maserine in the lower: That of the vpper (w<sup>t</sup> some farther aduenture) brought into subiection hyt selfe, the Ardes, Duffren and most of the woodmen, and to death manie of the princypale causers of the devastation and troubles therof, banished Brian in Arte (Tyrones nephewe) into the woodes causinge him to quyte a great profit w<sup>ch</sup> he mad upon those countreys towardes the mayntenance of these warres. The other brought in Shane M'Brian, and Neyle M'Hugh Cheife Lordes therof, w<sup>t</sup> the Castle of Eventufcarricke, and gaue us meanes to be doinge upon Tyronne w<sup>t</sup> the boates w<sup>ch</sup> wee lykwyse regayned. Besyde this yt made the Scotte to bethinke himselfe who not lykinge our lodginge so neare him sought for his pardon. Sr James the eldest brother died before yt was granted, and yt is nowe confirmed to Randall and the rest, who carrie themselves not so violently for the queenes service as is required of subiects, but rather temporise of both sydes, and keepe quiet by that Countreie of the Roote and Glynnys, parte of w<sup>ch</sup> doth mor properly belonge to the M'Quyllins who haue serued honestly amonge us all these troubles and before the landes be confirmed by grant I hope they shalbe thought upon by your honors; I knowe your Lordships desier not to be particularly enformed of euerie service and accedent; It sufficeth that I aduertise the Countreie is much bettered, and woulde sone be brought to quiett If Tyronne were well beaten, or coulde I free yt from the incursions w<sup>ch</sup> are sometye made upon hit by brian M'Arte (who keepinge himselfe w<sup>t</sup>in the saftie of one of the strongest fastnages of the North, and manie tymes assysted w<sup>t</sup> forcies from his vncle) kylls and spoyle such as lye w<sup>t</sup> Cartes watch wee beinge farre off, and our assystants not comminge in season for preuention of this mischeefe I caused the countreie to beare the charge of 300 men of their owne nations for their defence and the queenes service: in doinge wherof I hope to be excused and I make my humble protestation before your honors that I gett not one pennie by hyt, nor by anie thinge the gouernment hath afforded unto me but the queenes enter-taynement, and the fortune of the warres w<sup>ch</sup> yeeldes smale encrease to our payes in this countreie; I write thusse for that hit maye well be thought I make profit by this taxinge the countreie. If I had respected my perticulare gayne, I coulde not haue brought the Countreie to the state yt is nowe in, my greatest hope is your honors wyll thinke me an honest man whose greatest ambytion is to doe the queene service. Att my lorde Deputies late beinge in lecalle yt pleased him to strenthen me w<sup>t</sup> 200 foote commanded by Capt. Byllyns and Phyllyps, and to leaue order w<sup>t</sup> Sr Richard Morrison (who com-



mandes in lecalles) to drawe to me yf his lordshipe woulde haue us to vnite for anie especyall seruice, w<sup>ch</sup> maye welbe done w<sup>in</sup> two dayes but in his absence that countrie ys sone to be ouerrune and nothinge to be kept but the Castles, yet wee entende rather to aduenture the losse of theire goods then neglect of the seruice; The lorde Deputie hauinge as wee heare lately seated a garrison att Armaghe myndes to putt for Tyronne, and I woulde presently plante att Toome, but wantinge all manner of tooles (a fewe olde shouells excepted) I haue byne and yet ame driuen to deferre that busines to the hinderance of much seruice, for from thence I shalbe able uerie conueniently to make dayly roodes into that countrie, and to geue some assystants unto me yf I shoulde be hardly sett unto when I attempt w<sup>th</sup> my boates, against (w<sup>ch</sup> after manie harmes receaued) by them he the traytore workes manie defencies; besydes the continewall attendance of 300 men, I haue latly receaued materialls sent by my Lorde Deputies appointment for two more w<sup>ch</sup> are nowe a buldinge, and in them I wyll aduenture to doe the Traytore all the annoyance I can, for w<sup>ch</sup> purpose I ame nowe resortinge to that parte, beinge yesterdaye returned from takynge in of Castle Rewgh afore w<sup>ch</sup> wee hade manie blowes, and much labore, the possession of w<sup>ch</sup> Castle wyll free the Countrie from manie daungers they were subiect unto whylst yt was in the possession of reables.

I ame nowe a humble sutor to your honors for some 150 good foote to supplye our Companies, wee beinge nowe pestered w<sup>t</sup> Irishe, and some 20 Englysh horse yf yt shall please you; I lykewyse desier wee maye be no more victuled w<sup>t</sup> fyshe, and that I maye be excused for not sendinge that prouision to the remote garrisons wher our men haue no meanes to seeth them nether is ther anie one that comes good thether, w<sup>ch</sup> must needes starue the soldiare, ther are heere great plentie, and I maye be blamde for not essewenge of them, but I haue geuen your lordships my reasons; I must be driuen to victyle those garrisons full w<sup>t</sup> victualls this wynter for the countrie affoordes nothinge but a fewe beenes, and to those remote places none wyll haue accease, besydes this the countrie of hit selfe is so miserable wasted, that great famine must needs followe; The order that is taken by your honors is most commodious for the soldiare lyenge in good townes or neare sea coastes, but such as lye upon the enimies borders must trust to their owne stoore, and for breade this countrie affoordes none, nor grayne to make hyt; I knowe my Lorde Deputie and others geue your honores dayly notice of the strenth of the enimie, his declynge and of their hopes of their speedie ouerthrowenge and beatinge of him, but the sommers warres worke not so great effects as the wynter and springe in this countrie before w<sup>ch</sup> tyme If he be well sett unto of all sydes I thinke he wylbe vtterly rewyned w<sup>t</sup> all his confederattes, he is att this instant strayed upe w<sup>t</sup> manie garrisons w<sup>ch</sup> in longer neights wyll continewally serue upon him, I humbly becheech your honors to geue order that our tooles maye be of better makinge and that they maye come vnto us directly out of Englande. It is longe passage betwyxt this and Dublyn and those wehaue from them wee neewe make before wee worke w<sup>t</sup> them wherby the queene is duple charged.



I craue pardon for so tedious writinge being forced therto by longe silence and delyuerie of sundrie accedents, and praye for the longe continewance of your honors in all prosperitie and happines. From Knockfergus, this 8th of July, 1601.

Your honors trewe seruante,

ARTHURE CHICHESTER.<sup>1</sup>

*Sir Arthur Chichester to Cecil, 8th Sept., 1601.*

MOSTE HONORABLE,

This bearer Capt Alfoorde wyll acquaintance you w<sup>t</sup> the state and condition of the busines about lough foyle. For these partes duringe the staye of my lorde Deputie upon the blackwater and those borders of Tyronne I continewede att Masserine and the loghe from whence I made spoyle of such corne, cattle and poeple as wee lyghted upon in Kylultaghe as fare as Bandebrastowe, not beinge suffrede by the force of Tyronne to make anie staye in those fastnages for the takinge in of the foorte of Eneselaghilane of w<sup>ch</sup> he had so good care (yt beinge his chiefe meanes for entrance into the spoyle of these partes) that sometyme by himselfe, oftner by his forcies he remoued me from that attempt. And I was deuerted from fortetieng att Toome by reason of my lord Deputies violente desire to plante in Tyronne upon the lough syde, w<sup>ch</sup> beinge stronge would more damnefie and amaze that Traytore then anie other settlement or force yet attempted. To this busines I was by his lordshipe desygnde, and hauing furnishede myselfe w<sup>t</sup> foure boates, and other such necessaries as the place and tyme coulde affoorde, and taken a perfett veiwe of the most conueniente place to settle in yt being neare the heade of the loghe w<sup>tin</sup> fiae myles of Dunganone I was no soner retorne but notice was geuen me from his Lordshipe howe the reportes of Spanishe assystance and some wantes of men and other necessarie preparations woulde cause him for a tyme to make staye of these proceedings. This came in good tyme unto me for had I begune yt (his lordshipe w<sup>d</sup>drawenge from those borders), and wee not seconded w<sup>t</sup> good forcies, the worke woulde haue byne daungerous, and of smale momente for effectinge anie greate matter; These Spanishe reportes no soner came into these partes w<sup>t</sup> some perswation that my endeouours were to settle nearer Tyronne, but that Con Oneyle the younge lorde of the Vpper Clандeboye most Traytorously reuoluted and drewe w<sup>t</sup> him manie loose rascalls vpon w<sup>ch</sup> I was enforce to repayre thether to settle the countrie and keepe him from entringe and spoylinge therof, w<sup>ch</sup> I haue hetherto done by placinge Shane M'Brian his vncle therin w<sup>t</sup> whom I haue untill this tyme continewed w<sup>t</sup> the moste parte of the forcies settelinge a garrison att the Newtowne by w<sup>ch</sup> I hope shortly to banishe him out of those partes, he alreadie fendes such smarte for his folly that he seekes meanes to be receaued, but hauing byne w<sup>t</sup> Tyronne, Brian M'Arte and all the reables of these partes practisinge to drawe them upon us I thinke yt daungerous to trust him and chuse rather to

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers, Ireland*, vol. 203.

hazarde a disprofett by placinge his vncle, then rune apparant mischeife by trustinge him whom I hade w<sup>t</sup> so much labore and some losse of men so latly seated in the quiett possession thereof by baneshinge Brian M<sup>r</sup>Arte the vsurper, and can geue no reason for his reuolte but my holdinge a castle w<sup>ch</sup> I tooke from the enimie, for delyuerie of w<sup>ch</sup> I hade att that tyme no warrant from my lorde Deputie. They are the most perfideous generation that euer Christians lyued w<sup>t</sup> and ther is lyttle hope of a quiett gouernment untill they be absolutly confonded, especially w<sup>in</sup> this commande, wherin no peace can be setlede untill Tyronne be ouerthrowne and wastede, his dayly incursions (beinge so neare a neighbour) keepes them so in awe from becomminge trewe subiects, and this was the princypale cause that I drewe Shane M<sup>r</sup>Brian from the lower partes wher he halted w<sup>t</sup> her Maiestie temporisinge w<sup>t</sup> thenimie, as the Scotts, and all others upon those borders doe att this present to the hinderance and ouerthrowe of the queens proceedinges and exceedinge daungerous to us in all our attempts, and for this ther hath not byne founde a remedie.

My lorde Deputie hauinge made triall of the passages into Tyronne by that waye of Blackwater fendes them difficult and daungerous, and hauinge lefte good and stronge garrisons both at Armaghe and other partes to coupe him upe on that syde semes to be inclyned towardes attemptinge yt from these partes, wheunto I have yelded my opinion beinge required by his Lordshipe, and doe thinke to effect yt w<sup>t</sup> lesse payne, toyle and daunger then from anie parte of Irelande so the tyme of the yeare be taken for passinge the Bande att Toome, Colraine and other placies, and sufficient stoore of boates, men, victualls, munition and tooles att Maserine to be transported ouer the loghe to aunswer anie place they shalbe designede unto, from hence the force of logh foyle maye speedely and w<sup>t</sup> ease ioyne w<sup>t</sup> those of his lordships, and from Coleraine (as I ame trenly enformede) the waye is champion and playne to Dunganone, and to that place all thinges maye come by sea. I knowe my lorde hath geuen your honore notice of thencrease of men sent unto me, and howe he hath layde Sr Richarde Morrison w<sup>t</sup> 500 foote to geue assystance unto me when I sent for them, his lordshipe had such use of these last that he drewe most of them to himselfe w<sup>in</sup> 14 dayes of theire comminge into lecale, and for the two companies of Byllyns and Phyllyps they are so pestered w<sup>t</sup> Irishe that I maye not trust much unto them, w<sup>ch</sup> number wylbe multeplyed by reason yt hath pleased my lorde to bestowe the lyst of a 100 betwyxt them to make each companie a 150 and not hauinge anie supplye of men they must rayse them of Irishe or carrie the name w<sup>t</sup>out anie encrease of strength. This notw<sup>t</sup>standinge I fende my selfe much fauored by his lordshipe who woulde departe w<sup>t</sup> greater numbers were he in strenth accordingly, w<sup>t</sup>out a good supplye wee shalbe most Irishe or more decayed, for wher the busines lyes upon a fewe men they wyl sone be weaknede. I recommende the whole to your honors fauorable consideration and myselfe to your seruice who ame and euer wylbe

Your honors trewe servant,

ARTHURE CHICHESTER.

KNOCKFERGUS, this 8th of September, 1601.

St Richarde Morrison is returned to Iecale w<sup>t</sup> his owne companie and the companie of Capt. Calfeelde who can yeelde me no other assystance then keepeinge thenimie from those partes w<sup>ch</sup> gaue them great reliefe for I becheech your honore to knowe that all our seruises beinge so neare neighbours to Tyronne is to be done on a sudden wherof yf they haue the best warninge by our drawinge togeather our attempts are dasht and our selves in daunger. My man is returned w<sup>t</sup> your honors letters w<sup>t</sup>out monie dewe from her maiestie w<sup>ch</sup> hath greatly disapointed me. I humble becheech your honore to be good unto me and to pardon my importunitie.<sup>1</sup>

*Sir Arthur Chichester to Cecil, 5th October, 1601.*

MAY HIT PLEASE YOU MOST HONORABLE,

My last letters imported howe I was deuerted from prosecutinge the business upon the borders of Tyronne thorowe the perfidious reuolte of Con Oneyle w<sup>t</sup> 350 Bonnaghts leade by Vstone M'Donnell nephewe to Randall, my endeouours upon them haue hade so good successe that Con is nowe prisoner w<sup>t</sup> me in this her Maiesties Castle. Vstone the Scote and diuerse others slayne to w<sup>ch</sup> ende I brought them by charginge their campe in the fastnage wher they laye. This countrie is well quite of such daungerous enimies who had plotted a stronge partie w<sup>t</sup> Brian M<sup>t</sup>Arte, they all to be assysted upon shorte warninge from Tyronne, and hauinge gotten into the Duffren (of w<sup>ch</sup> the Scote wrote himsele lorde the countrie wholly reuoltinge w<sup>t</sup> him) all loose and Idle men from his two vncles of the Roote and Glynnnes resorted unto him, and he woulde haue byne a troublesome enimie hade not god ouerthrowne his treacherous and mischeifus designes. I can accuse his vncles as yet of no greater faulte then temporisinge they hauinge (to my knoweledge) geuen no assystance to Tyronne since they were pardoned, what they wyll doe hauinge entellygence of the Spaniardes footinge in Munster is uncertayne their hartes beinge vnknownen unto me. I have an other Nephewe of theirs prisoner w<sup>ch</sup> I gott followenge Vstone beinge seconde in commande; I haue geuen my lord Deputie notice of these thinges and knowe yt my deuetic to imparte yt to your honore hauinge the oportunitie of Collonell Egertons resorte to the Courte, who beinge heere for passinge his estate of Constableshepe of this Castle to his kynsman Cap<sup>t</sup> Seckfoorde is nowe readie to take shippinge for his retourne, ther hauinge byne no thorowe proceedinge betwyxt his kynsman and him, for that Cap<sup>t</sup> Seckfoorde thinkes his hauinge such a place maye sometyme hinder his other aduancements by the warres to w<sup>ch</sup> profession he myndes to betake himsele and this might call him from followenge his charge w<sup>t</sup> his companie; Thuse much I ame requested by them both to aduertise in respect your honore hath byne pleased to haue some foreknowledge in this matter by fauouringe them in procuringe the queens letters to this purpose. And knowenge the saftie of this her maiesties towne, my pooreselfe and her poeple are vnder the garde

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<sup>1</sup> *State Papers, Ireland*, vol. 204.

and mercie of that castle, I would be glade (If Collonell Egerton forgoe hit) that yt shoulde be past to some gentleman that standes more upon his honore and reputation then the profett of such a place, w<sup>th</sup>in w<sup>ch</sup> all our munition and ordenance are stoorde and planted; and If I had bine furnished w<sup>t</sup> monie he shoulde not haue lefte yt to this hazarde for wante of a chapeman, woulde yt please you to procure me payement of the monie dewe from her maiestie I woulde geue him the greatest part therof for his estate, I haue had so colde hearinge in these my humble demandes that I feare you lyke not my importunitie, and albeyt my present estate calles upon me yet I had rather lose that, and myselfe then geue you anie distate by my crauinge, I leaue hit to your honors fauorable consideration and myselfe to your seruice; Wee followe a paynefull, toylesome, hazardous, and ūprofitable warre, by w<sup>ch</sup> the queene wyll neuer reape what is expected untill the nation be wholly destroyed or so subiecte as to take a neewe impression of lawes and rellygion, beinge nowe the most treacherous infedells of the wourle, and wee haue to mylde spirets and good consciencies to be their masters, he is a well gouerned and warie gentleman whom their villanie dothe not deceaue; our honestie, bountie, clemencie and iustice make them not anie waye assured unto us, nether doth the actions of one of their owne nation thoe yt be the murther of father, brother or friende, make them longer enimies then untill some smale geift, or beinge be geuen to the wronged partie: This rumoure of 3 or 4000 thousande Spaniardes doth so tyckle them that in their foolyshe opinions they thinke presently to ouerrune us: were I supplied and as stronge in good Englyshe as I shoulde be I woulde make a thousande of them starue before maye, and the grande traytore shoulde not drawe towards his neewe gwestes but I woulde geue him a sufficient fire in Tyronne to lyghten his retourne; and as yt is I wylbe doinge upon him yf the whole countrie reuolte not, of w<sup>ch</sup> I am suspicious by reason of the treasonable doinges of those about lough foyle of whom S<sup>r</sup> Henrie Docwra and the rest had best assurance.

I haue sent the newes of Spaniardes ariuale by lande and sea to lough foyle whereof they haue not yet hearde, I have this daye lykwyse sent a messenger to my lord Deputie and state w<sup>t</sup> S<sup>r</sup> Henries letters impartinge the newes of those partes and the present estate of Dunagall, for that some order maye be taken for releeuing hit from Gallawaye, I knowe his owne packett make these thinges knowne to your honoure, and my lorde Deputies drawenge into Munster maye be some hinderance to this busines; It is nowe tolde me by one of my pies comminge from Tyronnes owne house that Turloe M<sup>c</sup>Henrie whom my Lorde Deputie hath receaued and geuen entertaynment unto hath sent to Oneyle to aduance towards the borders of the pale and that he wyll ioyne w<sup>t</sup> him to damnesie and ouerrune the whole countrie, upon w<sup>ch</sup> he sayth he is prouidinge for that iorney, and yf my lorde be gone it is uerie lykly.

If the number of Spaniardes be no greater then is bruted amonge us, I hope their comminge wyll not longe deuerte the busines of these northern partes; and yf they be once beaten yt wyll disharten all the reables in seeinge them on whom they haue grownded so great hopes

so sodenly ouerthrowne and might yt please the state so to thinke the speediest and readieste way to beate Tyronne wylbe founde out of these partes from whence stronge garrisons maye be w<sup>t</sup> more ease and helpes planted w<sup>in</sup> 5 myles of Dunganone then that att Ballashanan or anie other place to annoye him, from whence I knowe greater effects maye be wrought to his destruction then from anie immagenarie supposition, wee that serue the queene in this kyngdome are deuided into manie branchies and most of us propounde for our priuate chaiges but God is my wytnes I respect the generall and these warres ended I can content myselfe w<sup>t</sup> an other fortune, and I expecte no profett by these greater then your fauorable conceauinge of me w<sup>ch</sup> I wyll striue w<sup>t</sup> my best wytt and endeaouore to deserue. This newe Coyne hath much impouerished us of these partes, fewe or none wyll trade w<sup>t</sup> us and as yt is by S<sup>r</sup> Henrie Docwra certefied unto me the exchange shalbe seated att loughfoyle: They are the greater number and fytt to be the more respectet, yet I hope some good opinion wylbe hade of this place or myselfe pardoned by you yf I leaue hyt in farr better state then I latly founde yt. If yt be not preinditiall to what is purposed by your wysdomes some exchange in Scotlande woulde much releue this North w<sup>ch</sup> must w<sup>t</sup>out some preuention for our miserie sodenly fall into extremitie. If I haue waded further into these thinges then standes w<sup>t</sup> your good lykinge I humbly craue pardon from you whose trewe seruaut I ame.

Collonell Egerton departinge hence upon his greater busines, hath left one Whyttingeton his kynsman his Vice constable who hath formerly executed that charge and is a man honest and carefull in his busines; I wysh yt woulde please your honore to fauoure me in my motion for this place, and so I humbly cease to trouble your honore, prayenge styll for the continewance of all your happie fortunes. From Knockfergus, this 5th of October, 1601.

Your honors faythfull seruante,

ARTHURE CHICHESTER.

I haue sent your honore a note of our strentles in Englyshe and others, by w<sup>ch</sup> hyt wyll appeare howe grêat neede we haue of a supplye, yf yt please you so fare to fauoure vs neuer hauinge anie but that 100 w<sup>ch</sup> you assygned unto me when I was last in Englande: and haue hade asmuch occasion to weaken them as most partes of Irelande.

Your seruant,

ARTHURE CHICHESTER.<sup>1</sup>

*Sir Arthur Chichester to Cecil. 16th Jan., 1601-2.*

MOST HONORABLE,

I had thought to haue troubled you no more w<sup>t</sup> my letters vntyll I hade imparted matters of better momente hauinge latly acquainted you w<sup>t</sup> the treatie I hade w<sup>t</sup> S<sup>r</sup> James M'Connell touching his delyverie of Dunluce, my sendinge to his father Agnus Lorde of Kentyre (from whom my messenger is not yet retorned) my pro-

<sup>1</sup> *State Papers, Ireland*, vol. 204.



ceedinges w<sup>t</sup> the Sonnes of Sorly and other perticulars of this Countrie, but this gentleman comminge from logh foyle presently to departe (as he sayth) w<sup>t</sup> dispatches unto you, I desire to be excused for writinge breifly the remembrance of my dewtie beinge so much bounde and deuoted to doe you seruice.

I ame perswaded you are acquainted w<sup>t</sup> the honorable endeouours and fortunes of my Lorde Deputie in the South, sure I ame that Tyronne is at Dunganone latly retorned weakly accompanied and much distracted, what I learne is from such as haue followed his partie in these accursed rebellyons and would now sheift for themselves if they might be receaued, but their miserie and downfall beinge to humane iudgment apparent (all aydes and succors taken from them) so slyght respectinge and puneshinge their treacherie woulde be no ende but beginnings of neewe rebellyon, and in zeale to my prince and her service I write ther is not in these partes a lordlyke Irishe treuly and obediently her subiect: Ignorance, cullor of rellygion, desire of lybertie, and detestation of civilytie makes them to hate vs w<sup>t</sup> a deadly hatred, and their barbarisme geues vs cause to thinke them vnwourthie of other fauoure then to be made perpetuall slaues to her maiestie, hauinge thorowe their villanie wasted more treasure and consumed more men then woulde haue byne spent and loost in conqueringe three such kyngdomes amonge a rich nation, I hope their states wylbe shortly to receaue such lawes and puneshments as they haue well deserued and that they wylbe criubde from further ruininge into madness.

Such letters as I receaue from my lorde Deputie impart his purposes for makinge his warre upon Tyronne from these partes, and from no place can yt be better prosecuted, for the Traytor beinge hemde in on the South by such garrisons as are and wylbe planted by his lordshipe; on the west by the force of Connagh, Terconnell alreadie taken from him. an easie and playne entrance wylbe fourde frome the Bandesyde to passe thorowe all partes of his countrie he hauinge endeouored no meanes of defence or resystance but on that parte w<sup>ch</sup> opposeth vpon the Blackwater.

Some fortification must be erected vpon the logh syde neere Dunganon; and that beinge furnished w<sup>t</sup> sufficient prouisions from Masserene thorowe the benefitt of our boates the armie can not want w<sup>ch</sup> hath hetherto distressed them for want of carriadge, to w<sup>ch</sup> ende this stoore must be plentefully replenished (w<sup>ch</sup> is nowe verie bare) that wee maye take tymes for carriadge thereof to Maseriene the countrie beinge wast and wantinge carriadge; Sr Henrie Docwra entendes a plantation at Colrayne on O'Cannes syde, the lyke ought to be done on this in the Roote w<sup>ch</sup> is of more effect and commodious for the soldiare but wee are not as yet enhabled w<sup>t</sup> anie tooles or other materialls to vndertake that, or anie other worke; These placies maye be commodiously victuled by sea passinge vpe the riuier of the Banot, Into w<sup>ch</sup> a competent prouision maye be layde for furneshinge the Armie w<sup>ch</sup> must passe that waye, from whence they maye safely and ouer a playne countrie march to Dunganon neere to w<sup>ch</sup> all necessities wylbe before them, from whence my lorde maye



dispose of his forceries to wast and destroye all that opposeth against him : And this late ouerthrowe makes me hopefull that you shall lyttle neede the service of Scotts or other barbarous people the dis-furneshinge them of Spanishe succors beinge sufficient to breake all their neckes. The miserie of this countrie is verie great nothinge to be bought for this neewe coyne but in the towne amonge ourselves, no Scotte or other wyll receaue hyt, their tradinge for smale somes wyll not beare their charge in seekinge hit retournde from the placies of exchange, w<sup>ch</sup> not w<sup>t</sup> standinge a Scotte had lately brooke the lodgine and Chest of Mr. Beere the Exchang master resedent and taken out fife hundred and odde poundes w<sup>ch</sup> was 14 dayes in his possession vndiscovered but beinge apprehended we regaynde the monie and executed the partie who had no partner ; I becheech your honore to geue commande to the contractors to replenishe our stoore most of w<sup>ch</sup> is expended and other releife wee haue none. We haue lyttle encrease of strenth by our late supplye of foote w<sup>ch</sup> were the worst men and armes that euer came into a warre they are a charge to her maiestie and of no seruice.

And for horse wee haue receaued but thirteene I humbly becheech your honore to geue order for the rest w<sup>ch</sup> were appointed, and when other foote be taken vpe that one hundred good men maye be sent vnto us that wee maye retourne the worst of these If they be so longe lyuinge. This gentleman calls on me w<sup>ch</sup> makes me to craue pardon for my hastie writinge aduertesinge your honore that yt is delyuered me for treuth amonge the Irishe that Odonnell is eather slayne, drowned, or gone into Spayne. This w<sup>t</sup> remembrance of my deutie I humbly take my leaue, euer prayenge for the continewance of your honore in all health and happines, from Knockfergus, this 16th of Januarie, 1601.

Your honors trewe and faythfull Servante,  
ARTHURE CHICHESTER.

## No. VII.—LETTERS RESPECTING THE CESSATION OF SEPTEMBER, 1643.

LETTERS which passed between Colonel Chichester of Belfast and the Irish Generals regarding the Cessation of 1643, from the *Pinkerton MSS.* (*See p. 102.*)

It does not appear to whom the first communication written from Belfast by Colonel Chichester was addressed, but it opens the case of the contention, and explains its causes ; nor do the remaining letters tell how it ended. They only show clearly enough how weak was the bond of temporary union which the Cessation produced.

## WORTHY FRIENDS,

Upon Thursday the 5th of October Owen M'Art O'Neile came with about 3000 men horse & foot to Lough gall, & presently possessed himself of all our quarters, before the officers ha notice (as I am informed) & most of our men being reaping, below the Toll bridge, 400 or 500 of the Irish, armed and led by officers were sent thither, to put them away, & 200 into Capt. Joan's work, some troops to Capt. Ellises quarter, requiring them all presently to march away, & not to meddle with their corn any more. The Captains vizt. Capt. Trusdall & Capt. Colville (for all the rest were absent) refused to stir without orders, & much debate there was amongst them, & before their General, to whom Capt. Colville went, and though he pressed the performance of the Articles, & his own danger to quit his quarters without orders from his Colonel nothing would prevail, but in his own hearing, Owen M'Art gave order to his own officers to expel them by force, if they did not presently march away, upon which they all retreated to the next garrison of Port of Down: Whereupon in obedience to the 14th Article, I writ to Owen M'Art, as the enclosed copies will show you & what he answered, & thereupon there was a meeting by Major Rawden, my brother, & Capt. Patterson, with Col. Turlogh O'Neile, Col. Art O'Neile, and one Captain Reyley, appointed by their General the 10th of this month, & these enclosed were the notes of instructions what then they should speak of. But the Irish Commissioners (though they could not say any thing to purpose against it being so plain a truth) would not absolutely grant that O'Neilland & those places beyond the Bann could be justly claimed for our quarters, which you know best & how we were possessed of them the 15th of September. I am certain they were not then possessed by them, or could any other way but under colour of a cessation have gotten us out of them. That being resolved to be our quarters the rest must needs follow, that we must have restitution of them and satisfaction for our corn, of which I have sent you such notes as will be proved. And therefore press my Lord Marquis for his present order to them to satisfy the damages, & to be re-invested in our quarters, or that we may have liberty to fetch preys from them, if we can to satisfy ourselves. The greatest part of the corn was cut before the 15th, & for the rest it may be they will insist that by the last Article, they are to have three parts, but being cut and dressed by us, I see little reason we should be their labourers. If they had come with testimonies that they did sow any, they should have reaped in our quarters that was standing for the fourth sheaf. You will see by the heads of what was to be treated on, that our claim to all Ulster was not by any agreement to be abridged, therefore now see if by this clamper you can absolutely exclude them out of Ulster which they justly deserve.

But the conclusion Major Rawden & the rest made with them at their meeting was, that, to prevent further violations & questions for the present, until the Lord Marquis should order us our quarters begun beyoud the Bann, & satisfaction for our corn, that the Bann up to Knockbridge should limit between us, & from thence the Slinns to the Newry, & that none of theirs should come over into our quarters

but with passes to reap their corn for the fourth sheaf, or some other necessary occasions, & those to come unarmed, & such as were gentlemen only to carry swords. Notwithstanding they are still clamping with us & coming over. There was above 100 men in arms near Lisnegad to put out Capt'n. Perkins' men, but we have a sufficient strength of horse and foot thereabouts to dispute such questions, & a Marshal to do his office upon such persons as have no passes, until we hear from Dublin & have a more certain settlement. I have no more now to remember to you, but refer all the rest to your own solicitations being fully acquainted how our quarters lay, & the intent of the Articles: You know it will concern us very much to receive a speedy order for satisfaction, for they will be slow enough in performing & the delay will be loss to us, so I remain

Your assured friend to serve you

ARTHUR CHICHESTER.

BELFAST, 14th October, 1643.

*Instructions to treat about quarters. 6th October, 1643.*

The forces of Ulster claim all Ulster for their quarters, Charlemont & such other holds as the Irish had the 15th of September only excepted. And about the settlement thereof, certain officers are sent to Dublin, so that you are not now to debate of that matter, nor is any thing you shall agree on about these nearer quarters to prejudice or relate to that general claim of Ulster.

The 15th of September we were possessed of the Baronies of O'Neiland & Oriall in the County of Armagh, & by the Articles are to have all the benefits thereof & within our quarters, which if they interrupt us in, they are breakers of the Cessation: For the corn reaped it is all our own, & what is to reap: If any of them shall bring testimony from their superiors who did sow it, they shall reap it, paying us the fourth sheaf, & if they had come sooner, before the reaping, it should not have been denied them.

For the bounds of the quarter at Charlemont, they can by the Articles claim no farther than they possessed the 15th day of Sept'r. when they were straitly beseiged, nor doth the Articles provide in their behalf for commissioners within our quarters, as it doth for those in our possession in their Territories, yet you may agree upon convenient bounds twixt Lough gall and it for the present without relating to the great question.

If they have put any of our men out of their quarters, & gotten their corn, demand restitution, & let the forces be kept together, & the quarters maintained till you can agree, & have the Cessation performed, & until you send hither & receive further orders what to do: And, in the mean time, protest their proceedings & charge them with the breach of the conditions of the Cessation, but be careful not to proceed to blows, unless they absolutely necessitate you to it. Also, you are to acquaint them how many men have been killed & taken of late within our quarters by the Irish, & agree upon a course to reform it, than which I know none better than that we send our Marshals to

perform their offices upon all that are found within our quarters without sufficient passes.

*From Sir Phelomy O'Neill.*

SIRS,

I thought fitt to write unto you to see what your intention is staying in the country after the publication of his majties Cessation of Armes, still committing acts of hostility, contrary to the Originall published unto you, spoiling and shearing all the Corne in the country. This being all, expecting your speedy answer I rest

YOURS PHELOMY O'NEILLE.

CHARLEMONT, 4th October, 1643.

*A Copy of Col. Chichester's Letter to my Lord Marquesse.*

MY LO:

Upon the comming downe of the Irish unto these partes of Ulster our Souldiers being dispersed in their Quarters about the fieldes gathering Corne, and too confident and secure since the Cessation, Owen MacArt O'Neill came suddenly amongst them with all the strength hee could make and dispossessed them and seized upon all the Corne they had gained in O'Neiland, betwixt Armagh and the Ban, whereof we were possessed the 15th September and long before, as will be made appear to your Lo<sup>p</sup> by my Lieut. Coll. and the rest of our officers there: And although one of the Captaines disputed our right and possession according to the Articles of Cessation hee gave orders to his owne officers in the Captaine's hearing that if our men did not presently quitt their quarters they should bee forced to it, so that to prevent any act of hostilitie our men retired to the next garrison at Port of Down, and having no means of carriage, left behinde their Corne which they had gained, and the Irish seized upon and still deteyne it: Notwithstanding I have, according to the Articles, demanded restitution of it and of our Quarters, as will appeare to your Lo<sup>p</sup> by the Copies of the Letters and awnswers which are sent up to Lieut. Coll. Matthews and Captain Jones to present to your Lo<sup>p</sup> at your fitt tyme, for they will not bee ordered by any other way but your immediate Judgement and Command which they promise to obey, and to that purpose have sent Agents to attend you, and when your Lo<sup>p</sup> hath heard them I am confident it will most evidently appear that they have violated the Articles of Cessation which I humbly desire wee may bee speedily repayed in, or that wee may have libertie to take our own remedy and satisfaction.

I humbly remayne

Your Lo<sup>ps</sup> most humble Servant

ARTHUR CHICHESTER.

The appeal thus made to Ormond did not settle this embroilment. The several letters which passed between the disputants, and which show the weak hold, as expressed in the text, which the Cessation had on them, were laid before him, fully displaying the difficulty of composing the quarrel.

*Col. Chichester to the Commander in Chief of the Irish forces near Charlemont demanding restitution of Quarters and Corne.*

SIR,

I am informed by some of the officers of my Regiment that you are come on this syde Armagh with a force, and have not onley interrupted them in, but put them out of those Quarters which wee were possessed of the 15th of Sept<sup>r</sup> which is contrary to the Articles of Cessation that I did little expect such proceeding without giving us notice of your pretences, that, upon a fayr debate, things might have beene orderly settled in pursuance of the Articles, which on our part should not have been fayled in one jott, and if any had come with a passe and testimony from their superiors to clayme an interest sooner to reape what they had sowne in our quarters upon the termes agreed on by the Articles it should not have been denyed them. Wherefore I have now sent to demand restitution of our Quarters and what hath been taken from our souldiers, which, if you think fitt to make, I shall be ready to appoint a meeting in any convenient place and manner of some of ours in the behalfe of the English forces with some of yours to speake of such further differences as may fall in question. Otherwise if you think not fitt to repayre this breach our men have suffered I must protest against your proceedings and find out some other remedye,—so expecting your speedy answer I remayne

Your friend wherein I may

6th October, 1643.

ARTHUR CHICHESTER.

*Answer of the Irish General of Ulster to Col. Chichester.*

SIR,

Yours of the 6th of this instant I have received out of which I understood that you were given to understand by some of the Officers in your Regiment that I have expelled them out of their Quarters and their possessions here whereof they were possessed on the 15th Sept<sup>r</sup> last. In that particular I answer. First. Their pretence by keeping upon such playne fields as I found them possessed of, where there was neither fortification nor note of any defence,—that I conceive to be an unlawfull possession, and truly was as much as to leave one man upon every hill in Ulster and make it a possession. Secondly: Your men being left by direction in such open places, which certaynely I did admire, and my forces being come into the Countrye who indeed might do them more hurt beyond my direction than they could by any way reape benefitt or profit by their staying, for which I should be heartily sorry, that such acts or cause should bee offered or given by any under my command, whereby it should bee thought or taken to bee a breach in the Cessation, and inasmuch as you desire restitution of all this I will, if you please, to send some gentleman upon Tuesday next to Knockbridge, who will offer you satisfaction in reason; and if they cannot agree let us both appeale to the State and the Lo. Marquesse, whose censure pending his Maj<sup>s</sup> desire I will really obey; in the mean tyme,

I remayne yours as you are myne,

7th October, 1643.

OWEN O'NEILLE.



*Owen M'Art's Letter.*

SIRS,

Your continuance within our Quarters and your dayly spoile and wast of our corne and goods is a mighty breach to his Maj<sup>ty</sup>s long expected Cessation to unite a quiett settlement and union betweene his subjects, if you meane really to conforme yourselves to the Cessation which as it doth appeare you doe not by your staying since publishing the Cessation at your garrisons, and intruding upon us within the territorye of our own precincts and limitts. S<sup>rs</sup> you may understand that what losse soever of corne and other things you have done us since the 15th September laste, that the same to the least penny we will deduct oute of the summe we are to paye unto his Mat<sup>ie</sup>, being so agreed on by the Lo. Marquesse: now it is expected you will betake yourselves unto your garrisons, and forbear any more violating of the Cessation and what hurt you have done since the said tyme that you will make reparation therein.

I rest

Yours, as you show yourselves loyall to his Mat<sup>ie</sup>

OWEN O'NEILLE.

*6th October, 1643.*


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NO. VIII.—LETTER ABOUT THE TRANSPLANTATION OF THE SCOTS FROM THE NORTH TO OTHER PARTS OF IRELAND.—*See p. 133.*

THE following has no direct relation to Belfast, but shows the feelings of the governing party towards the Scottish inhabitants of the north of Ireland in 1653, and the difficulties likely to attend their removal to Waterford, Kilkenny, and elsewhere; and how to accomplish the transportation in the most moderate and judicious manner, or, as they say, “with the least noises.” The paper following, which is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, is in a manner but the introduction to the entire, the correspondence on the subject between the heads of the State in Dublin and the Ulster Commissioners occupying about fifty written pages, though diverging a little into collateral matters. This introduction will be enough. As stated in the text, the unwise scheme was abandoned when Oliver Cromwell changed the Government. Some writers say that change was received by the Commissioners who had the charge of this great measure with mortification.

*Relative to Sending the Scots out of Ulster.*

On Friday the 1<sup>st</sup> inst. we came to Belfast, where we met Col. Hill and that day issued a Summons for all such as had borne Arms against the Parliament in England, Scotland, or Ireland and lived within our Quarters in that part of Ulster to appear before us at Carrickfergus on



Wednesday following to render an account of their so living within the Parliamentary Quarters, and of their affections and fidelities to the present Government.

On Saturday the 2<sup>nd</sup> inst. being then at Carrickfergus, considering what to do with those who were to appear before us on Wednesday following: Resolving in regard of their great number not to commit any to Prison, the several experiments which had been fruitless in that kind, but to use all ways of meekness and gentleness towards them: We concluding and unanimously agreeing, that there is no visible expedient to preserve these parts in safety, but by transplanting all popular Scots into some other part of Ireland and that it was necessary immediately to put this in execution, as to the most dangerous of them: & finding them sufficiently averse from the Irish, we thought it would as well strengthen your hands against the common enemy there, as weaken your fears and lessen your charge in these parts: Nevertheless because we had no power to make such a resolution but by the last article of our instructions and because it was necessary, if this be practised, that yourselves appoint the place to which they should be so transplanted, we did not think fit to publish our thoughts in this, till we should receive your Honours' approbation and direction concerning it, which we humbly beg with what speed your greater affairs will permit. In the mean time we have heard what they could offer us towards full satisfaction concerning their fidelity and peaceable demeanour for time to come, and find them all desirous we should trust to security by bond which we cannot think sufficient, in regard that if they give us our friends to be bound for them they will not scruple to leave them to be destroyed by us; if our enemies, we suppose such will revolt with them. So then we rather chuse for the present security, till your pleasures might be known concerning transplanting the most dangerous, to tender them the Engagement, which the greatest part of them have signed but we cannot say out of conscientious grounds; the rest have part of them signed a negative paper which we send enclosed; some others refuse that and this and will neither promise nor give bond not to disturb the present Government, but we have not imprisoned them in regard we do not at present fear their power, and are not willing to let the rest (towards Derry whom we have not yet called) see how far we mean to go.

In our observation of the temper of this people, we find that they are more or less perverse according to the temper of their respective ministers, and their being placed all together, or mixed among English and Irish, which are also further arguments to us for their transplantation.

Touching the prevention of correspondence, we thought it necessary before we could make any resolution thereupon to view the sea coast which we have already done as far as Cushendun near Fair Foreland the north east point of Ireland, and find that there are landing places all along the Coast though not one good Harbour except Oldfleet Haven (which is as good as any in Ireland) and that in two hours they may pass betwixt the headland of Cantyre and the coast of Ireland between Glenarm and Fair Foreland, so that we judge it impossible

to prevent correspondence while the Scots are suffered to live along the sea coast; nevertheless that we might do something towards it we have sent Captain Fenicke's Company to seize all the Boates upon the Coast as also to discover and intercept correspondences, likewise sent a letter into Scotland to the Governor of Air for his advice and concurrence in this and also given some other intimations which we send enclosed.

We intend on Monday our journey towards Derry to try the temper of men in those parts that so we may be fitted to give a judgement on the whole which we intend to do in all parts at one time according to the several capacities in which we find persons to be; in order to the effectual doing of which we humbly conceive it requisite that those forces about Trim, bordering on these parts, be in readiness to attend anything that may occasionally fall out upon such alterations, which may prove to be very little if the business be secretly carried, but privacy in your debates of these things and the like care in the sure conveyance of your resolutions to us will much facilitate this work, which if discovered may probably cause great disturbance, if not frustrate this whole work.

We conceive here are at least 300 serviceable saddle horses besides a greater proportion of draught horses also fit for service, which are in persons' hands not fit to be trusted with them, although the respective owners have given security to have them forthcoming, which we cannot take out of their hands, in regard we have not money to pay for them, nor know how to keep them for want of forage if we take them into our own hands, and therefore desire your commands concerning them. And all things else we may serve you with shall be faithfully obeyed by

Your Honours' Humble and faithful Servants,

HENRY JONES.

ARTHUR HILL.

ROBERT VENABLES.

ANTHONY MORGAN.

CARRICKFERGUS, 9th April, 1653.

Dr. Henry Jones, one of the Commissioners, was afterwards Bishop of Meath. It is unnecessary to say who Colonel Arthur Hill was, thus acting for the Commonwealth. Venables was in his right place. Major Morgan was afterwards Sir Anthony Morgan.

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No. IX.—MISCELLANEOUS PAPERS OF COMMONWEALTH, PROTECTORATE, AND OTHER TIMES.—*See p. 137.*

THE following selections from Cromwellian papers of different persons and different things show the tone of the times. Many such could be collected from the great depository in which they are contained, but what are here may be sufficient examples.

Mr. Wyke, sometimes written Weekes, was an Independent, a conspicuous minister in Cromwellian times, and is frequently noticed. He did not disappoint expectation, if the rewards he received be sufficient proof (see p. 137). He was first sent to Lisburn, and there is this further notice of him at a later period, which is, it is to be supposed, original and correct.

“Andrew Wyke, minister of Lisburn, was in 1658 removed to the united parishes of Donagheloney and Tullylish, his salary of £150 being continued, but in 1659 the English inhabitants of Magheralin having petitioned that Wyke be appointed their minister, his abilities, moderation, and Christian conversation being well known to them; and as the inhabitants of Tullylish and Donagheloney consist of Papists and Scots who are so bound up to their own judgment that they will not admit of any other, and being contiguous to Magheralin he is appointed to preach the word at Magheralin, still taking care of his former charge adjoining.”

In farther illustration of the opinions entertained respecting Mr. Wyke, and as an example of the sentiments professed by those in high station in 1651, Major George Rawdon writes on 20th November, 1651, to Lord Conway—

“The Commissioners have sent us a rare minister, one Mr. Weeke, a most powerful preacher, soe that y<sup>e</sup> Congregation at Lisnegarvy is very great. Wee looke upon it as a very great mercy and providence. Mr. Hardy is to goe to y<sup>e</sup> Lurgan. Next Somir my Br. Hill hopes to be in his owne house in Killwarlin, it is the first story high allredy; wee are very full at Lisnvg. Our son Moyse & his wyfe live in y<sup>e</sup> house and the lady Croy (? Conway). And my daughter Pen (?) will make it a wedding with Capt. Collville wy<sup>thm</sup> 10 or 12 days. The Doctor is y<sup>r</sup> servant very much.”

The Dr. Colville here mentioned was a truly important personage, a pluralist in the church, and the Sir William Petty of the County of Antrim in his acquisitions as a speculator in landed estates. It is only a very few years since the last of those estates in Antrim, stretching over nearly 50,000 acres, was sold in the Landed Estates Court. The vulgar tradition—so great and rapid was his rise—that he had private business transactions with his Satanic majesty is well known about Connor and elsewhere in Antrim. His name occurs often in the history of the times. Its introduction will be recollected in the will of Henry Le Squire of Belfast, who leaves him two good cows (*ante*, p. 239), a very moderate bequest, however useful it may have been deemed.

“Upon the Petition of Mrs. Mary Chichester, *alias* Copley, desiring

that the Town and Barony of Dungannon in the County of Tyrone might be brought within the line of protection—And upon consideration being had thereof, and of the Report made by Col. Robert Venables, and Col. Arthur Hill concerning the same—It is thought fit and ordered that the said Castle and Barony of Dungannon be, and are hereby declared to be within the line of protection as is desired, and that the Petitioner be permitted to repair the said Castle and to plant her said Lands. Provided that due care be taken the Tories receive no relief or advantage thereby.

“DUBLIN, 23<sup>rd</sup> Jany., 1656.”

This lady, so plainly styled Mary Copley, was mother of Arthur Chichester, second Earl of Donegall, and daughter of Roger Jones, first Viscount Ranelagh. Her first husband was John Chichester, brother of the first Earl. John Chichester's son succeeded to the earldom, his uncle Arthur having no male heirs, and the Dungannon property as well in right of his father. John Chichester died in 1647, and his widow, above-named, subsequently married Colonel Christopher Copley.

When Mary Chichester she had been also a petitioner to the Government some years before for £735, the arrears of pay due to her late husband, Colonel John Chichester, and which she urgently needed “for subsistence for herself and her children, all her property having been destroyed by the rebels.”

It not having been possible, nor indeed, as has been said elsewhere, necessary, for the author of this work to enter on general Presbyterian history, he has, of course, abstained from attempting the like; but, having been supplied with many Cromwellian papers, he cannot refrain from publishing the two following, both of which have been received from Mr. Prendergast. The first is a letter urging the Commissioners of the Precincts of Belfast and Derry to look out for and cause ministers to be appointed for the guidance and comfort of the people. The second is a full list of the ministers and schoolmasters in Belfast Precinct in 1656, which is not in Dr. Reid's *History of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland*. There is only in that work the list for 1655, but this includes a much greater number of ministers, and certainly with very liberal salaries.

*To y<sup>e</sup> Com<sup>rs</sup> of Belfast and Londonderry.*

GENT.,

Understanding that there is a want of Godly and well affected Ministers in most parts of Ulster whereby the good people there inhabiting become destitute of those spiritual Comforts they

might otherwise enjoy and mutually endeavour the enlarging of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ which as it is our business to promote soe ought it to be our Care to lay hold upon all opportunities Conducing to soe necessary a work. In Order whereunto wee recommend unto your faithfull inquiry of such persons of the Scots Naçon and living in your respective Precincts as you may have reason to believe Godly, peaceable & not turbulent dispositions but qualified for that service. The which being certified wee shall (through the Blessing of God) make so reasonable a returne as will afford them due encouragement and suite with yo<sup>r</sup> desires. In expectation whereof wee remaine  
Yo<sup>r</sup> loving ffrriends,

CHAS FLEETWOOD.

MILES CORBET.

JOHN JONES.

 $\frac{A}{90}$  p. 638.

## MINISTER'S ALLOWANCES, 1656.

*Precinct of Belfast.*

	£
Timothy Taylor of Carrickfergus ... ..	200
Essex Digby of Belfast ... ..	120
Will <sup>m</sup> Dix of Derreaghy ... ..	120
Andrew Wike of Lisnegarvy ... ..	150
James Kerr of Ballimoney ... ..	120
Thomas Johnson of Dromore ... ..	100
Thomas Skelson of Newry ... ..	100
Patrick Dulkan of Hillsborough (removed to Drom- guallen) ... ..	80
William Fullerton (£80 made up £100) ... ..	100
Daniel M'Neale of Ballicastle (£80 made £100) ... ..	100
Robert Echlin of Strongford ... ..	80
William Moore of Knock & Breda ... ..	50
Ja <sup>s</sup> Watson (£50 made up £80 Sept, 1656) ... ..	80
John Walwood of Glenavy ... ..	40
Hugh Graffan att Magheradrill (his £25 made £50 from 25th Dec., '57) ... ..	50
Andrew Law of Dondrom, Kilmore, &c. ... ..	50
James Gordon of Comber ... ..	100
John Drisdale of Portfarry ... ..	100
John Gregg of Newtowne ... ..	100
Antony Buckworth of Magheralin ... ..	60
Gilbert Ramsey of Bangor ... ..	100
Tho <sup>s</sup> Peebles of Creek Donnall (? Dundonald) ... ..	100
W <sup>m</sup> Richardson of Killileagh ... ..	100
Andrew Stewart of Dono-Dee ... ..	100
Andrew M'Cormick of Magherally ... ..	100
Patrick Adair of Carden Castle ... ..	100
Robert Cunningham of Broad Island ... ..	100
Gabriel Cornwall of Balliwoolen ... ..	100
Thomas Hull of Learne ... ..	100

	£
Gilbert Simpson of Balliclare . . . . .	100
W <sup>m</sup> Jack of Aghadowy . . . . .	100
Donald Richmond of Hollywood . . . . .	100
Burnham West of Kilwarley . . . . .	120
James Threlfall of Kilmore . . . . .	100
Cuthbert Harrison att Shankhill cum Lurgan . . . . .	100
Tho <sup>s</sup> Crawford, Dunnagore (£60 made £100) . . . . .	100
John Barnes, Drumcree, & from 29th Sept., 1656 . . . . .	100
Robert Hamilton att Killead, upon Sir John Clotworthy's presentation (being allowed of) . . . . .	120
Clinton Maude att Antrim, upon the like presentation allowed of, and allowed out of y <sup>e</sup> treasury . . . . .	100
John Jones att Seagoe . . . . .	80
Rob <sup>t</sup> Huetsen att Rathfriland, from 25th March, 1657 . . . . .	120
Henry Livingstone att Drumboe, Co. Downe, from 25th June, 1657 . . . . .	100
David fearfull att Drumkad, from 24th June, 1657 . . . . .	50
Robt. Hogsgeard att Balliroshane, from 29th Sept., 1657 . . . . .	100
David Buthell att Ballymanagh, from that time . . . . .	100
Antony Kennedy at Temple Patrick, from that time . . . . .	100
John Douglass att Braid, from that time . . . . .	100
John Fleming att Bally, from that time . . . . .	100
John Ayton at Tynan, Co. Armagh . . . . .	100
James Shaw att Carmony . . . . .	100
William Milne at y <sup>e</sup> Isle of Magee . . . . .	100
Francis Peddington in Upper Iveagh . . . . .	100
Antony Shaw att Ballywalter . . . . .	100
Mich <sup>l</sup> Bruce at Killanshee . . . . .	100
John Shaw of Machrichohell . . . . .	100
James Fleming att Glenarme . . . . .	100
Rob <sup>t</sup> Denner att Conner . . . . .	100
William Swalden at Carlingford . . . . .	100
Edward How att Charlemount . . . . .	100

## SCHOOLMASTERS, 1656.

Thomas Halslam of Lisnegarvy . . . . .	40
John Cornewall of Belfast (£20 made £30) . . . . .	30
John Smith of Carrickfergus . . . . .	30
John Newcome of Dunpatrick . . . . .	20
Ralph Davenport of Antrim . . . . .	30
Lawrence Swanbreake att Lurgan . . . . .	20
Donagh O'Dowda att Ballicastle . . . . .	20
George Savage, Ardmagh . . . . .	30

O'Quin may appear rather a peculiar name for a Presbyterian minister, but the introduction of it gives occasion to what may prove probably a curious note. His name is often rather prominently intro-



duced in this part of the country as one of a minority who did not at first coincide in all things with his brother ministers ; he could speak Irish, and, it was considered, might serve for propagating Presbyterianism through that medium ; he, finally, when his views somewhat changed, became minister of Billy, in the County of Antrim, receiving from the Cromwellian Government the salary of £100 a-year. He was a very worthy person, and a wish was felt of following out his history to the end, by introducing the following interesting information, which fully sets it forth. He died in January, 1657, and his executor, Teig O'Moany, applied to the Government for some assistance to pay his small debts and funeral expenses. Henry Cromwell's Government, with their wonted liberality, complied with the request, and directed, probably the Commissioners of Belfast, to pay £25 for the purpose. He was buried in the churchyard of Billy, and the appropriation of a portion of the generous gift applied to the erection of his tomb.

Being aware of the above facts from the Cromwellian papers, and having learned that the tomb was still to be found, information regarding its existence and present state was sought for, and the Rev. Alexander Field, Presbyterian Minister of Dervock, most kindly furnished the following particulars :—

“The burial-place is enclosed with a stone wall about three feet in height, coped with freestone, and surmounted by an iron railing two feet high. The tombstone nearly fills the whole space, and rests on transverse slabs about eighteen inches from the ground. It was covered with a thick coating of moss, which I removed, and having swept it and cleaned out the letters, copied the inscription which I herewith send you. The letters are in modern style, deeply and cleanly cut, and quite fresh. This may seem strange, but I account for it in this way. Under the same stone lie the remains of the Rev. Thomas Babington, Vicar of Billy, who died in 1823. I think that then the original inscription was erased and the stone cleaned, and the inscription re-cut along with the following to Mr. Babington, which this stone also bears immediately following it and in similar letters.”

Sub Hoc Etiam  
Cippo  
Requiescunt  
Reliquae Pastoris  
Reverendi  
Thomae Babington A.M.  
Hujuscae Parochae  
In Triginta Annos  
Vicarii  
Obiit Quarto Novs. MDCCCXXIII.  
Aetatis LXIX.

Thus together are mingled the bones of the plain Presbyter of the stormy days of 1657, and those of the Episcopal minister of 1823—a rather singular union.

The inscription on the tombstone to Jeremiah O'Quin is as follows, the error in the word *Exeunte*, which should be *Exercente*, together with the freshness of the letters, making the conjecture that the entire letters were re-cut in 1823 every way probable—

Epicedium  
Reverendi Pastoris  
Jer. O'Quinii  
O'Quinius Pastor Mollis  
Requiescit  
In urna Hac  
Ast Anima In Celo  
Numinis Ora  
Videns  
Exeunte Illius Verbi  
Sedaverat Agnos  
Christi  
Jam Ex Vivo Flumine  
Potat Aquam  
Obiit Ult<sup>o</sup> Jan<sup>r</sup> MDCLVII.

The inscription to O'Quin is in the *Pinkerton MSS.* It is also probably elsewhere, but the details connected with it, as here related, are quite original.

Jeremy O'Quin was not always amenable, as the following order to Venables proves. The rebuke is exceedingly mild on the part of the Government.

“*To Colonel Venables. 13th Nov., 1651.*”

“Wee have received information that Mr. Jerome O'Quin living in those parts is somewhat embittered against the interest of England, & hath of late publickly expressed the same in prayers & other publick exercises. We desire you to inform yourself of the fact, & if you find him under that temptation, we are of opinion his service in the work of the Lord might be of much advantage in other parts of Ireland, as in Dublin or parts where there are Irish that cannot speak English. If you find the said information be true we desire you to send him to us by first convoy, & let him know we shall take care & provide for him so long as he shall demean himself in a spirit of meekness & peace as becometh the Gospel. If the information abovementioned be not known to you, you may enquire of Mr. Wyke what he hath heard or known touching the same, but you are desired not to mention how the information cometh to you.”

This letter regarding O'Quin is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*

Colonel Blood's history occupies many pages in the *Pinkerton MSS.* They are rather local, as is the following notice in the Rawdon papers, in a letter from Lord Conway from Lisburn to Sir George Rawdon, dated 18th November, 1663 (p. 202):—"I set out guards immediately upon all the avenues near this place into the Counties of Down and Antrim where they have since continued night and day, and because the next was our market day, which gave Blood the opportunity of passing by us. I sent the same instant to Col. Hill to keep a good guard at Hillsborough, and I raised the country that night to keep watch upon all the ways through Kilulta into the county of Antrim." Lord Conway proceeds at some length to express his disappointment and annoyance at not being able to discover where Blood had hid himself; but at this point the *Pinkerton MSS.* take up the story, and tell a few words more of his escape on this occasion, though we are left in the dark as to the authority or where obtained. They, however, relate "that Blood passed Lisburn as Lord Conway tells by taking advantage of a market day. . . . At Antrim he was almost caught by Lord M<sup>t</sup> Alexander but he succeeded in making his escape into the country of the Glens where he passed for a Roman Catholic priest." A great deal more is written of his escape from the Glens into Scotland, where he fought at Rullion Green. "He came back again to Ireland, landing two miles from Carrickfergus where he was nearly caught by Lord Dungannon." These evasions and escapes of the arch-conspirator are curious, and his whole history is entered into in connection with the north of Ireland plot—said to have been concocted by Presbyterians, ministers and others—ending with these lines by Andrew Marvell—

" When daring Blood, his rent to have regained,  
Upon the English diadem distrained;  
He chose the cassock, suringle, and gown,  
The fittest mask for one that robs the crown:  
But his lay pity underneath prevailed,  
And while he saved the keeper's life he failed,  
With the priest's vestments had he but put on  
The priestly cruelty—the crown had gone."

Marvell's observations about priestly cruelty are rather bitter.

There are several letters from Jeremy Taylor in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, but whether unpublished or not cannot be said. They are stated to have been found among the Cromwellian papers. A few samples are inserted in this appendix. Comment on them is uncalled for, and they are printed here merely as matters of curiosity. The short letter which precedes them, and which is also part of the *Pinkerton MSS.*, is probably original, and has some relation to general Presbyterian history.

“The Presbyterian ministers of Ulster wrote a letter of thanks to Charles II. and also to the Duke of Lauderdale and Sir Robert Murray for the services they had done their countrymen by speaking in their favour. From this we see that all the Presbyterian ministers in Ireland even then were Scotchmen. Among the Lauderdale papers in the British Museum, 23120, there is a letter from one R. Hamilton to Lauderdale, dated Dublin, 5th Nov., 1672, in which he says—‘Some Presbyterian ministers in this country making their humble Address to your Grace this night desired me likewise to signify their sense of your Grace’s kindness to them and his Majesty’s care of them in bestowing on them of his own mere motion a considerable sum on the Establishment of this kingdom. On my word they are a considerable number in this kingdom and able to do his Majesty good service when called to it if they be prudently managed.’ There may have been curious negotiations respecting this sum of £600 secret service money granted to Sir A. Forbes the Marshal of Ireland ‘without account.’ Dr. Reid says that he has heard a tradition that this Regium Donum was enjoyed by the ministers for only one year. . . . But Sir Arthur’s grant was augmented in 1677 to £634 12s. 0d. per annum . . . and on the accession of James II. he continued the grant at £634 12s. 0d.”

*Letters of Bishop Jeremy Taylor to Ormond about the Presbyterian Ministers, Dec., 1660.*

“The country would quickly be very well if the Scotch ministers were away ; at least some of the prime incendiaries. All the nobility and gentry, one only excepted, are very right, but the ministers are implacable. They have for these four months past solemnly agreed and very lately renewed their resolution of preaching vigorously and constantly against episcopacy and liturgy ; they defy them both publicly ; they disparage his Majesty’s government ; they slight and undervalue his most gracious concessions in his late excellent and princely declaration ; they talk of resisting with blood, and stir up the people to sedition, doing things worse than can be expressed by any but themselves.

“My Lord, I have invited them to a friendly conference, desired earnestly to speak with them, went to them, sent some of their own to invite them, offered to satisfy them in any thing that was reasonable. I preach every Sunday amongst them, somewhere or other. I have courted them with most friendly offers, did all things in pursuance of his Majesty’s most gracious declaration ; but they refuse to speak with me ; they have newly covenanted to speak with no Bishop and to endure neither their government nor their persons.

“But observing the great impression I have already made in these parts upon the affections of the gentry and the better sort of the people, of which I can bring an universal testimony, and they having refused to dispute to which by their people they were urged, and which was expounded ignorance and tergiversation in them, have now gone about to asperse me as an Arminian, and a Socinian and a papist,

or at least half a papist and such things of which they understand little and I am not at all guilty as having no other religion but that of the Church of England for which I have suffered the persecution of eighteen years, and for which I have often stood up an advocate against all opposition, but yet they have lately bought my books, and appointed a committee of Scotch spiders to see if they can gather or make poison out of them; and drawn some little things I know not what into a paper, and have transmitted them to their agent in England and intend to petition his Majesty that I may not be their bishop. Now this they do not to remove me, though they fear me very much but to put a slur upon the order, supposing if I were removed no man would be so desperate as to undertake so comfortless a province against so unconquerable schismatics.

“My noblest Lord, my humble petition to your Excellency is that you will be pleased to remove me from this insupportable burthen or to support me under it. They threaten to murder me; they have studiously raised reports that I was destroyed by the Scots; they use all the arts they can to disgrace me, and to take away the people’s hearts from me, and to make my life uncomfortable and useless to the service of his Majesty and the Church.”

This letter was enclosed in one to Ormond’s secretary, Sir George Lane, in which Taylor entreats his support in the following words:—

“I wrote to you the last week and took the boldness to give you an account of the seditious and insolent preachings of the Scotch presbyters against his Majesty’s Government ecclesiastical; their infinite railings against me; their stirring up the people to tumult and rebellion; their intent of petitioning his Majesty to remove me from that diocese, and many other things which I should not so much as hint to you again but that we have some fears that the vessel miscarried which carried the packet.”

*To Ormond, 11th June, 1663.*

“I was visiting some parts of my diocese, and found Mr. Jno. Drysdale newly come from Scotland and busy in the place of his own residence as in former times. Within two days after my finding him there we had notice of the late Presbyterian conspiracy which the mercies of God and your Grace’s wisdom and diligence so happily have discovered. I had nothing to charge him with, but because I had vehement causes of suspicion I caused him to give £500 bond for his appearance at two days’ warning not to depart without your Grace’s leave and for his good behaviour in the mean time. My Lord Conway, Major Rawdon, and myself had it in consideration whether he ought to be sent up to your Grace in Dublin; but because we had no particular charge to send up with him we humbly expect your Grace’s pleasure and order concerning him. But I humbly beg leave of your Grace to say that the late meetings of the pretended ministers, the refractoriness of the people, and their mutinous talkings, the abode of



the ministers without any pretence of employment or estates visibly to detain them in these parts makes us all full of confidence that as long as these ministers are permitted amongst us there shall be a perpetual seminary of schism and discontent; and that they were all more than consenting to the late design. They are now as they think very safe and passed (past) all danger because they are not inquired into; but we still have Mas John Greg, Gordon, Wilson, Cunningham, & Ramsay, whose custom it is as soon as they hear the people of any parish are conformable, one or two of them goes thither and quarters upon them till they leave their duty. They are here looked on as earnest and zealous parties against the government. Your Grace hath Leviston in your hands; he is the most perverse and bitter enemy we have to the laws; we hope he will be better before your Grace parts with him."

The allusions to Blood's plot in the foregoing are very distinct.

Again, within a few months of his death (he died 2nd August, 1667), he writes to the Duke of Ormond the following letter, which seems to have been printed, Mr. Classen Porter, who gave it to me, referring to it as if it had been so.

"This late rebellion in Scotland hath too much verified our fears in these parts that the indulgence lately given to the Presbyterians who were sent away and since permitted to re-enter would be of evil consequence. Ever since their coming till within these two or three months no complaints were brought to me of them but that they clancularly (? clandestinely) did ecclesiastical offices, took and kept the people from their parish churches, received pensions regularly from the parishes which they formerly had usurped, and the people forced to pay their money by the authority of some landlords or rather landladies; the clergy were greatly discouraged and greatly injured. But now of late they keep their conventicles more publicly and advance the former mischiefs to greater and more insufferable consequences, and have given us too much cause to believe that the Scotch rebellion was either born in Ireland or put to nurse there. May it please your grace I speak not this by chance or passion but can prove where Crookshank was entertained for many days together immediately before the rebellion. It is also informed and offered to be proved that Kennedy sometime of Templepatrick preached in the Diocese of Dromore that the people ought for a while to bear the loss of their goods for the Godly people in Scotland would speedily oppose the power. And about the Six Mile Water which is not far from Antrim the people when this summer they gave bond for payment of their tithes at All Saints would not sign the Bonds till they put in this clause, 'in case there be no war or public disturbance before that time,' or to that purpose."

*March 28, 1661.—Hillsborough.*

"Here I am perpetually contending with the worst of the Scotch ministers. I have a most uncomfortable employment, but I bless



God I have broke their knot, and made the charge easy for my successor.

& we are assured by Carte that during the two years which intervened before the enforcement of the Act of Uniformity the great majority of the ministers themselves had yielded if not to his arguments—to his persevering kindness and Christian example.”

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NO. X.—THE WILL, FUNERAL, &C., OF THE FIRST EARL OF DONEGALL.—*See p. 152.*

The following is the Marquis of Ormond's letter to Charles the First soliciting the granting of the Earldom of Donegall to Colonel Chichester, whose effigy is here represented. It was complied with, and Colonel Chichester was created first Earl of Donegall by patent, 30th March, 1647.—*Lodge*, vol. i., pp. 330–334.

“Your Majesty has been graciously pleased to reward some that have either served your Majesty actually, or suffered for you eminently in their persons or fortunes, with new creations or with additions of honour in this kingdom. That Col. Arthur Chichester hath missed such a mark of your favour I conceive to have been through his own modesty, and my not representing his personal merit. If he outlives his father he will be among the foremost of the Viscounts of this kingdom in place, and I am sure beyond them all, except one, in fortune, though he be for the present deprived of the latter for his faithfulness to your Majesty's crown, the same means whereby his uncle got both it and his honour. He hath served your Majesty against the Irish rebellion since the beginning of it; and when, through an almost general defection of the northern army, he was no longer able to serve your Majesty there, he came with much hazard to take his share in the sufferings of your servants here, and with them to attend for that happy time that we trust will put us in a condition to contribute more to your service than our prayers. If your Majesty shall think fit to advance this gentleman to an Earldom I conceive that of *Dunnegall*, a county in the province of Ulster, wherein he should have a good inheritance, is fittest, which I humbly offer to your Majesty's consideration as a part of the duty of your Majestys, &c.

“ORMOND.”

WILL OF ARTHUR CHICHESTER, FIRST EARL OF DONEGALL.

In the name of God Amen, I Arthur Earl of Donnegall being at ye present in perfect memorie and judgement and understanding though fraile and weake through bodily sickness and distemper, accounting it spiritual prudence and Christian wisdome to ease myself



*The Right Hon<sup>ble</sup> ARTHUR CHICHESTER,*  
*First Earl of Donegall.*



of all outward and worldly cares that thereby I may be more free to lay down my earthly tabernacle and render up my soul to God who gave it me doe make this my last will and testament.

And first I solemnly and sincerely render up my soul to God my most merciful Father and Creator, believing in ye alone merits and righteousness of Jesus Christ my most gracious Savouir and Redeemer for everlasting Salvation and eternal Life, and my body to be decently interred att Carrickfergus in ye buriale place of my Ancestors, and for my worldly goods and Estate I doe order and appoint as followeth.

And first, I doe nominate and appoint my dearly beloved wife Lettitia Countess of Donegall my sole Executrix of this my sole last will and testament, and my brother-in-law Sir Michael Hicks, Knight, and Arthur Upton, Esq., whome, out of ye speciall confidence I have in them, I appoint to be overseers to see all ye following particulars of this my last will to be truely, timely, and punctually performed.

*Imprimis.* I leave and bequeathe to ye Poor of ye Parish of Belfast, Two Hundred Pounds to be disposed of in such manner and form as my said Executrix or Overseers shall think fitt.

*Item.* I leave and bequeathe to ye Poor of ye Parish of Carrickfergus Fifty Pounds sterl. to be disposed of in manner and form as my said Executrix and Overseers shall think fitt.

*Item.* I bequeath to my grand-child Arthur St. Leger all my lands and tenements in ye County of Waterford and One Thousand Pounds sterl., to be paid him within one year after my decease.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to my two grand-daughters, sisters to the said Arthur St. Leger, One Thousand Pounds sterl. a peece to be paid within one year after each of their marriage respectively.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to John Wrey ye son of Chicester Wrey deceased One Hundred Pounds sterl. per ann. for seaven years commencing ye next quarter after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to my severall nephews, Capt. John Chichester, Quartermaster John Chichester, Mr. Charles Chichester, and Mr. Arthur Chichester One Hundred Pounds sterl. yearly to each of them for four years, ye first payment to commence within one month after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to such of my severall servants that are actually in my service at ye present time and hath served me above one whole full year to each of them respectively one whole year's wages or salary over and above what is really due to them for their past service and wages, and to Ann Ogelby my servant that constantly attended me Ten Pounds sterl. yearly for four years.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to Mr. Samuel Bryan my household Chaplain as a testimony of my sincere love to him Fifty Pounds, over and above his year's salary, for four years, to commence within two months after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to Mrs. Elizabeth Cornwall Ten Pounds sterl. a year for four years to commence within a year after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to Richard Cannon Ten Pounds sterl. a year for four years to commence within a year after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath unto Arthur Upton of Castle Norton,

Esq., Fifty Pounds sterl. a year for four years, to commence within a year after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath to my brother-in-law Sir Michael Hicks aforesaid One Hundred Pounds sterl. a year for four years to commence within a year after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath unto Dr. Hugh Kenedy, who hath been Phisition to myself and family these severall years past, Fifty Pounds sterl. a year for four years to commence within a year after my death.

*Item.* To Mr. Claudius Gilbert Ten Pounds sterl. yearly for four years to commence within two years after my death.

*Item.* To my Honble. father-in-law Sir William Hicks I leave and bequeath a piece of plate to ye value of Forty Pounds sterl.

*Item.* I leave to my god sons Arthur Upton and Chichester Mc'Cartney to each of them Ten Pounds sterl. a piece yearly for four years to commence within two years after my death.

*Item.* I leave and bequeath out of my tenderly and fatherly affection to my dear daughter Ann Chichester as a testimony of my owning her dutyfull behaviour to myself and dear mother over and above what I have given her by deed of settlement ye sum of Two Thousand Pounds sterl. to be paid out of the lands of Ennishowen in ye County of Donegall.

*Item.* Out of a further testimony of my respect and particular kindness that I have to my dear wife's brother Sir Michael Hicks I will and bequeath to him ye castle, town, and eleaven quarters of land of Burt lying in ye Barrony of Ennishowen in ye County of Donegall for sixty-one years commencing at Allsaints last, ye years undetermined in ye present lease he hath being included therein. And whereas the said Sir Michael stands oblidged by virtue of his present lease to pay Fifty Pounds sterl. yearly for ye said lands my will now is and so I declare and appoint that he my said brother-in-law Sir Michael Hicks his Executrs., Admistrs., and Assigns pay only ye just sum of Twenty Pounds Sterl. yearly henceforward out of ye said lands and premises aforesaid untill ye end and expiration of ye sixty-one years aforesaid.

*Item.* My will is and so I declare, appoint, and order that ye severall legacies aforesaid be truely, thankfully, timely and punctually paid out of that and those parts of my Estate that is not settled by deed or deeds upon my aforesaid dear wife and daughter it being none of my intention to charge any part of my Estate I have settled upon my said wife and daughter with any of ye aforesaid legacies.

*Lastly.* I do hereby revoke and disannull all former and other will or wills whatsoever, provided always that this be not construed or intended to prejudice or invalidate any deed or deeds formerly made to ye use benefitt or behoofe of my aforesaid dearly beloved wife and daughter preceding ye date of these presents. In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal ye seventeenth day of March, 1674.

Witnesses, DAVID KENEDY.  
HENRY UPTON.  
GEO. Mc'CARTNEY.

MEMORANDUM.—Before ye signing and sealing hereof he willed and bequeathed a year's salary to his steward Mr. Patrick Mortimer.

No signature is attached to this will, which has probably been merely an omission of the copyist.

Arthur St. Leger was son of his eldest daughter, Mary Chichester.

John Wrey was the grand-nephew of the Earl, and the relationship of the others whom he next remembers in his will for moderate bequests is expressed.

Mr. Samuel Bryan, so much regarded by the Presbyterians in Belfast, and so useful to them, shortly before the death of Lord Donegall, was the household chaplain, and was highly esteemed by him, if we may judge from the language which he uses.

Dr. Hugh Kennedy was probably the leading medical practitioner in Belfast in the seventeenth century. As mentioned elsewhere (p. 576), he was ancestor of the Cultra family of that name.

Mr. Claudius Gilbert, as he is called, who was Vicar of Belfast, is also named for a bequest, a probable evidence that he was held in esteem; and undeniable proof of the same feeling is afforded towards the father and brother of the Countess of Donegall.

### *The Funeral of the Earl of Donegall.*

The Right Honourable Arthur Earl of Donnegall, Viscount Chichester, Baron of Belfast, Governor of Carrickfergus, and one of his Majesty's most honourable Privy Council of Ireland, departed this life the 18th March, 1675, in his Castle at Belfast, from whence on the 20th May following he was conveyed to the Church of Carrickfergus and there interred in the ancient Monument of his Ancestors. He first married Dorcas daughter of Sir John Hill of Hunley in Warwickshire. Secondly Lady Mary Digby eldest daughter to John Earl of Bristol by whom he had issue Six sons—The first Arthur, 2d. Arthur, 3d. Edward, 4th. John, 5th. Digby, 6th. James, and two daughters viz. Beatrix and one other born dead. He lastly married Leticia daughter to Sir Wm. Hicks Knt. and Bart. by whom he had issue Wm. Lord Chichester.

The Proceedings of the Funeral from Belfast to Carrickfergus was on this manner.

Three Troops.

Six Company's of Foot.

Two Conductors.

Sixty-eight poor men walking two and two.

The Standard carried by Francis Carey.

Gentlemen's Servants walking two and two.

Esquires' Servants           do.           do.

Knights' Servants           do.           do.

Baronets' Servants           do.           do.

The Guidon carried by Capt. Hamilton.

Servants to Noblemen's younger sons, and other persons of higher degree.



The Defunct's Servants two and two.

Two Trumpets.

The first mourning horse led by a groom.

The pennon borne by Mr. Gilbert Wye.

Gentlemen.

Esquires.

Physicians.

Knights.

Baronets.

Barons.

Viscounts.

Earls.

The Chief mourning horse.

The great banner borne by Henry Upton.

The Steward, Mr. Harrison, } All with

The Treasurer, Mr. Mortimer, } white staves

The Controller, Capt. Leathes, } walking together.

The Chaplains, Mr. Brian and Mr. Gilbert.

The Bishop.

The Spurs borne by Mr. Shaw.

The Gauntlets by Mr. Dalway.

The mantle, helm, and crest, by Mr. Tooly.

The Target by Lieut. Phillips.

The Sword by Major Strowd.

The Coat of Arms by Athlone.

A Gentleman Usher carrying a Crown and Cushion; Mr. Hutton walking on his left hand.

The Hearse drawn by Six Horses.

Capt. Hamilton with Banner

Roll of Courtney.

Esq. Netterville.

Capt. Colvill.

Banner Roll of Digby.

Sir Charles Fielding.

Sir John Rowley with Banerole

of Bouchier.

Esquire Upton with Hickes

Banner Roll of—

Esq. Montgomery.

Sir R. Maxwell with Ban. Roll

Coppleston, Hicks.

Esq. Clotworthy.

Sir H. Langford Ban. Roll of

Rawleigh.

C O R P S .

Gentleman Usher.

Chief Mourner Lord John Butler his train borne by a Gentleman Usher.

The Lord Marquis of Antrim.

Capt. Chichester and Capt. St. Leger.

Mr. John Chichester and Mr. St. Leger.

The Horse of Honour led by the Gentleman of the Horse, and two Grooms.

The Sovereign and Burgesses of Belfast.

The Defunct's Troop.

The funeral might give occasion for much more extended remarks than the will. The sixty-eight poor men were indicative of the

number of years the Earl had lived. Gilbert Wye, who bore the pennon, was in his employment. John Tooley was a "chirurgion;" but most who were conspicuous at this great funeral were distinguished persons in the country, many of them relations of the deceased. The Sovereign and Burgesses of Belfast closed the procession of perhaps the greatest funeral that ever left the town—not in numbers, but in the order and formality to be expected at the obsequies of a military man of rank, and the owner of the town from which it issued.

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NO. XI.—LIST OF THE FIRST TWELVE BURGESSES OF BELFAST; THE SOVEREIGNS FROM 1613 TO 1842; THE MEMBERS OF THE CORPORATION APPOINTED BY JAMES THE SECOND; AND THE MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FROM 1613 TILL THE UNION.—

*See p. 156.*

THE abstract of the original Charter of Belfast has already been printed in the text (see p. 89). The old Charter, in its entirety, is of immense size, and the abbreviation of it there given is quite sufficient now for every purpose. The names of the first Burgesses here follow:—

Sir Fulk Conway, Knight.  
 Sir Thomas Hibbotts, Knight.  
 Sir Moses Hill, Knight.  
 Humphrey Norton, Esq.  
 William Lewsley, Gent.  
 John Willoughby, Gent.  
 Carew Hart, Gent.  
 John Assh, Gent.  
 Daniel Booth, Gent.  
 James Burr, Gent.  
 Walter House Crimble, Gent.  
 John Burr, Gent.

It would be altogether impossible, and under any circumstances would be unnecessary, to mention the names of all those who were Burgesses of Belfast during the long existence of the old Corporation, but the ten disqualified when the Test Act was passed are here noted, and there may have been others who had formerly been Burgesses and their time expired, as some of the following ten also were.

They were—Wm. Crawford, William Lockhart, Neill McNeill, Capt. Edward Brice, James Buller, David Smith, Arthur Macartney, John Chalmers, David Butle, and Isaac Macartney.

## LIST OF THE SOVEREIGNS OF BELFAST.

The Sovereign was chosen on the 24th June, and entered into office the following 29th September. His year consequently formed parts of two years, but his official year was deemed to be that in which his duties terminated. A difficulty consequently arose sometimes of naming rightly the chief magistrate for any year in which his death occurred, or when resignations from political disagreements, or differences with the Chichester family, or perhaps other reasons, were in operation to cause irregularity. Even this list may not be quite correct, but it has been compiled with care chiefly from the Town Records.

1613. John Vesey or Veysey. According to the rule specified above,  
Vesey was appointed in 1612.
1614. John Willowbye.
1615. James Burr.
1616. Same.
1617. Carew Hart.
1618. Same.
1619. George Theaker. { Probably father of Thomas Theaker, a  
1620. Same. { future Sovereign of notoriety, and Captain  
George Theaker.
1621. ———
1622. Edward Holmes.
1623. Same.
1624. ———
1625. ———
1626. Edward Holmes.
1627. Carew Hart.
1628. Edward Holmes. Original note in the Town Records at this  
place—"Left £40 Sterl to y<sup>e</sup> Poore being y<sup>e</sup> first money  
left in y<sup>t</sup> kinde."
1629. For years 1621-24-25-29, the names of the Sovereigns have  
not been ascertained. The probability is that the office  
was filled in each year by the Sovereign of the preceding  
year; or else that, as appears from the Records, the office  
in those early years being rather evaded or not desired  
by those most suitable to perform its duties, it was alto-  
gether unfilled, or got over in some way by Lord Chi-  
chester's steward or seneschal.
1630. Walter House Crymble.
1631. Lewys Thompson.
1632. Robert Foster.
1633. Thomas Brampton or Brumston.
1634. Lewys Thompson.
1635. Henry Le Squire, Constable of the Castle.
1636. Same.

1637. John Washer; hitherto Walker. He was seneschal to Lord Edward Chichester.
1638. John Leathes, Senior.
1639. Henry Le Squire.
1640. John Haddock or Haydock.
1641. Thomas Hamington. So sometimes hitherto written, but the correct name seems to have been Harrington.
1642. Thomas Stephenson.
1643. Thomas Theaker.
1644. Robert Foster.
1645. William Leathes.
1646. John Asshe, or Ayshe.
1647. Hugh Doake, or Doke, or Diroacke, or Duock.
1648. Robert Foster. This was the Sovereign who was rebuked for "holding the Courts without mentioning of the King's name contrary to the Covenant, who promised to amend the same in time coming." He had been Sovereign in 1632.
1649. George Martin.
1650. Thomas Harrington. Sworn before Francis Meek by order of Colonel Robert Venables.
1651. Same.
1652. Thomas Waring, or Warring, and also sometimes Warren and Waryng.
1653. Same.
1654. Thomas Theaker.
1655. John Leathes Junior.
1656. Thomas Waring.
1657. William Leathes.
1658. Same.
1659. Same. Died in office 6th May, 1660. In his room Francis Meek was sworn in as Sovereign to continue till Michaelmas next following.
1660. Captain Francis Meek.
1661. John Rigby. This name is sometimes written Ridgely, and sometimes Rigbee. A marginal note in the Book of Records states that "he was Justice of Peace for County of Antrim as he was Sovereign of Belfast, the Sovereigns for the time being successively to be Justices of Peace for the County aforesaid."
1662. George Macartney. Sworn and made Justice of the Peace for the County of Antrim. The first time Mr. Mc'Cartney was Sovereign. After his name the term Gent. is placed. He is also called Captain. He was sworn before Thomas Walcot, Constable of the Castle, in the absence of the Earl of Donegall.
1663. Same.
1664. Thomas Waring.
1665. Same. The following is in the Record Book after the general notice:—Thomas Waring was sworn in on the 29th day

of September, 1665, according to the use and custom of the Town for one whole year, but on the 23rd of November following he departed this life at Belfast. And Edward Reynell Gent. was the 1st day of December next following by election and with the consent of the Rt. Hon. the Earl of Donegall sworn Sovereign of the Borough until the Feast of St. Michael following.

1666. Edward Reynell. This name appears to be sometimes written Reynett.
1667. Captain George Macartney.
1668. Same.
1669. William Warring.
1670. Same.
1671. Thomas Wallcott.
1672. George Macartney.
1673. Same.
1674. Hugh Eccles.
1675. George Macartney.
1676. Same.
1677. Same.
1678. Same.
1679. Same.
1680. Same.
1681. Francis Thetford. Sometimes Thellford, but Thetford is correct.
1682. Lewis Thompson.
1683. John Hamilton.
1684. Same.
1685. Thomas Knox.
1686. Captain Robert Leathes. } The events which happened at this  
 1687. Same. } time, when Leathes was displaced by  
 1688. Same. } Thomas Pottinger and restored again  
 1689. Same. } by Schomberg, have already appeared  
 1690. Same. } at pp. 224-25.
1691. William Lockhart.
1692. James Macartney. James Macartney, perhaps first appointed, as in a list of Sovereigns formerly published he is said to have been removed, not being qualified according to the statute. It is not stated what successor served the rest of the year.
1693. William Craford.
1694. Same. Mr. Craford was the Sovereign who introduced Patrick Neill and James Blow, the printers, into Belfast this year.
1695. Captain Edward Harrison.
1696. Lewis Thompson.
1697. Earl of Donegall. "Captain Robert Leathes served Deputy for that year, the Lord Longford and Lady Anne then Lords of the Castle."
1698. David Smith. 1699 and 1700 were formerly said to have been the years of David Smith's Sovereignty, but 1698 and 1699 are more probably correct.

1699. David Smith. "Captain Charles Chichester was elected, but went to London, and came not to Belfast at Michaelmas after to be sworn, so David Smith continued Sovereign this year according to Charter."
1700. George Macartney.
1701. John Chalmers.
1702. David Butle.
1703. Same.
1704. "David Butle was sworn Sovereign for the year ending Michaelmas, 1704, but relinquished from a late Act of Parliament disabling Dissenters to serve in public offices, and was succeeded for the remainder of the year by George Macartney, Counsellor at Law."
1705. George Macartney.
1706. Same.
1707. Same.
1708. Same. "Continued Sovereign for the year ending Michaelmas 1708 because according to the Charter the Leet sent down to the Sovereign and Burgesses under the hand of the Countess of Donegall and the Earl of Donegall had three Burgesses named one of whom was Captain Edward Brice who was elected but would not qualify himself according to the Act so that he was disabled from taking the office of Sovereign." It probably continued vacant.
1709. Richard Wilson, pursuant to Leet signed by the Earl of Donegall.
1710. Roger Haddock.
1711. Same. Captain John Chichester was elected, but he not appearing, Haddock continued for 1711.
1712. Hans Hamilton.
1713. Robert Leathes.
1714. James Gurner, sometimes Gurnen. Gurner is the correct name.
1715. Same. "The persons nominated by the Earl of Donegall in the Leet for this year were James Gurner, Robert Leathes, and Robert Le Byrtt. Six Burgesses voted for Robert Leathes, and Six including the Sovereign and Constable of the Castle for Robert Le Byrtt. The Sovereign did not give two votes but declared if he had two votes he gave them for Le Byrtt. James Gurner continued Sovereign the said year of this Election"—that is, 1715.
1716. Henry Ellis.
1717. John Carpenter.
1718. Same.
1719. Henry Ellis.
1720. Robert Le Byrtt.
1721. Same.
1722. Henry Ellis. Henry Ellis was elected to be Sovereign for the year ending Michaelmas, 1722, but there is a blank space left in the Records with the following N.B:—"Since the death of Mr. Ellis, and during the year, through contests



between the Burgesses and Family there was no Sovereign. But by agreement George M'Cartney Junior did serve." These two years seem uncertain. For a part of the first Mr. Ellis perhaps served, and George Macartney, Jun., the remainder of the time.

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| 1723. George Macartney, Jun. Hans Hamilton is sometimes stated to have been Sovereign in 1723, but Macartney, from the note, is more likely. |  |
| 1724. Major George Macartney. Died in office, when Nathaniel Byrtt was chosen.   |  |
| 1725. Nathaniel Byrtt. Died in office, when Doctor James Macartney was chosen.   |  |
| 1726. Dr. James Macartney.   | 1764. Same.  |
| 1727. John Clugstone,  | 1765. Same.  |
| 1728. Same.  | 1766. Stewart Banks.   |
| 1729. Thomas Banks.  | 1767. George Macartney.  |
| 1730. John Duff.   | 1768. Same.  |
| 1731. Arthur Byrtt.  | 1769. James Hamilton.  |
| 1732. John Clugstone.  | 1770. Stephen Havon.   |
| 1733. Same.  | 1771. Stewart Banks.   |
| 1734. Robert Le Byrtt.   | 1772. Shem Thompson. Grandfather of Wm. Thompson, Esq., the present Secretary to the Harbour Commissioners.  |
| 1735. Same.  |  |
| 1736. Margetson Saunders.  |  |
| 1737. Same.  |  |
| 1738. Same.  |  |
| 1739. Robert Le Byrtt.   | 1773. James Lewis. The family of Lewis has been of Belfast for a very lengthened period. They were from Wales, the name having been originally Llewellyn. They were related to Jas. Gurner, who was two years in succession—1714–15—Sovereign of the town, and whose widow, Dorcas Gurner, mentions in her will (1751 ?) her grandson, James Lewis. This James Lewis resided at the Grove on the Shore Road; he was Sovereign of Belfast in 1773–77, and from family papers also in 1774, and was grandfather of the late Frederick Harry Lewis, who was twice Mayor of Belfast—1854 and 1869. |
| 1740. Same.  |  |
| 1741. John Duff.   |  |
| 1742. Same.  |  |
| 1743. Robert Le Byrtt.   |  |
| 1744. Arthur Byrtt.  |  |
| 1745. Same.  |  |
| 1746. Same.  |  |
| 1747. John Duff.   |  |
| 1748. Margetson Saunders.  |  |
| 1749. George Macartney.  |  |
| 1750. Same.  |  |
| 1751. Same.  |  |
| 1752. Arthur Byrtt.  |  |
| 1753. John Duff. Died in office.   |  |
| 1754. Margetson Saunders.  |  |
| 1755. Stewart Banks.   |  |
| 1756. Same.  |  |
| 1757. Arthur Byrtt.  |  |
| 1758. Stewart Banks.   |  |
| 1759. George Macartney.  |  |
| 1760. Stephen Havon.   |  |
| 1761. James Hamilton.  |  |
| 1762. Stewart Banks.   |  |
| 1763. George Macartney.  |  |

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| 1774. James Lewis.   | 1808. Rev. Edward May.   |
| 1775. George Black.  | 1809. Edward May, M.P.   |
| 1776. Same.  | 1810. Same.  |
| 1777. James Lewis.   | 1811. Rev. Edward May.   |
| 1778. Stewart Banks.   | 1812. Thomas Verner.   |
| 1779. Samuel Black.  | 1813. Same.  |
| 1780. Same.  | 1814. Same.  |
| 1781. Same.  | 1815. Same.  |
| 1782. George Black.  | 1816. Rev. Edward May.   |
| 1783. Same.  | 1817. Thomas Ludford Stewart.                                      |
| 1784. Samuel Black.  | 1818. Same.  |
| 1785. George Black. Both George<br>and Samuel Black, who<br>were for so many years<br>Sovereigns of the town,<br>were of the Strandmillis<br>family of that name.<br>They were brothers. | 1819. Thomas Verner.   |
| 1786. Rev. Wm. Bristow.  | 1820. Same.  |
| 1787. Same.  | 1821. Same.  |
| 1788. Same.  | 1822. Same.  |
| 1789. Samuel Black.  | 1823. John Agnew resigned, and<br>Andrew Alexander ap-<br>pointed. |
| 1790. Rev. Wm. Bristow.  | 1824. Andrew Alexander died,<br>and John Agnew ap-<br>pointed.     |
| 1791. Same.  | 1825. John Agnew.  |
| 1792. Same.  | 1826. Same.  |
| 1793. Same.  | 1827. Rev. Lord Ed. Chichester.                                    |
| 1794. Same.  | 1828. Sir Stephen May.   |
| 1795. Same.  | 1829. Same.  |
| 1796. Same.  | 1830. Same.  |
| 1797. John Brown.  | 1831. Same.  |
| 1798. Rev. Wm. Bristow.  | 1832. Same.  |
| 1799. John Brown.  | 1833. Same.  |
| 1800. Same.  | 1834. John Agnew.  |
| 1801. Same.  | 1835. Same.  |
| 1802. Arthur Chichester.   | 1836. Same.  |
| 1803. Edward May, M.P.   | 1837. Same.  |
| 1804. Same.  | 1838. Same.  |
| 1805. Same.  | 1839. Same.  |
| 1806. Same.  | 1840. Same.  |
| 1807. Rev. Edward May.   | 1841. Thomas Verner, Jun.  |
|  | 1842. Same, and last Sovereign<br>of the old Corporation.          |

The preceding is a full list of all the Sovereigns of Belfast from the time of the formation of the old Corporation, in 1613, till the year 1842, except the four near the beginning, whose names are unrecorded. The successional order, it is hoped, will be found correct. It may have been expected that personal or family notices of the numerous Sovereigns named here would have been introduced. In several cases that has been done in other places, and in a few instances some

attached to the preceding list, and obtained from the Records or other sources.

The foregoing list is followed up in the present instance by the names of the thirty-five Burgesses appointed by the Government of James the Second, with a few illustrative remarks.

A LIST OF THE BURGESSES OF BELFAST APPOINTED BY KING JAMES'S GOVERNMENT, 16TH OCTOBER, 1688—THIRTY-FIVE IN NUMBER, OF WHOM THE SOVEREIGN WAS ONE.

Thomas Pottinger, Sovereigne.	Charles Mulalan, Gent.
Sir Neill O'Neill, Baronet.	Abraham Lee, Gent.
Mark Talbot, Esq.	George M'Cartney, Merchant.
Daniel O'Neill, Esq.	Thomas Knox.
Charles O'Neill, Esq.	James Shaw.
Felix O'Neill, Esq.	William Lockard.
John O'Neill, Esq.	William Dobbin.
John O'Neill of Ballyboran, Esq.	Edward Pottinger.
Daniel M'Naghten, Esq.	Peter Knowles.
James Wogan, Esq.	John Fletcher.
James Netterville, Esq.	John Echlas.
John Savage, Esq.	William Crafort.
Martin Gernon, Esq.	Henry Shades.
John M'Nathan, Esq.	Humphrey Dobbin.
Eneas Moylin, Esq.	David Smith.
George M'Cartney, Esq.	Hugh Acklis.
John O'Neill, Gent.	John Chambers.
Patrick Moylin, M.D.	

The Recorder left to the choice of the Corporation.

RALPH BOOTH, Town Clerk and Prothonotary.

As the head of King James's Corporation Thomas Pottinger requires to be first noticed.

The following papers disclose something of his occupation and position when his Sovereignty had come to an end. They prove the accuracy of an incidental observation in *Presbyterian Loyalty* that he had become a Commissioner for Prizes. The papers here are rather detached, but are given precisely as they were received from the copyist in the London Record Office. Pottinger refers with confidence to his services to the officers and the army, when seeking restitution of the moderate sum of £103 8s. 0d. which he had advanced to the former, and of which his "present necessity" now required the repayment.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR HONOR

Your Lord<sup>PPS</sup> are not unsensible of my Services to their Ma<sup>ts</sup> Army and Interest in Ireland, testified by the Report of the

Lords Justices upon my former Petiçon Referred to them. I have Impaired my Stock by my zeale to serve their Mat<sup>ies</sup> and all I desire at p<sup>r</sup>sent is, that I may be paid the 103*l* 8*s* 0*d* which I lent to, and Disbursed for several officers of the Army, & I am willing to stay to be considered for my other services, when their Mat<sup>s</sup> Affairs can better admit it, if I had but this sūme for my p<sup>r</sup>sent necessity, and towards my charges. Your Lo<sup>ps</sup> will also find by an Accot given in to Mr. Montague, that I have discovered 426*l* due to their Mat<sup>ies</sup> upon Prize Goods in Ireland not yet accounted for.

I humbly beg the favor of being admitted to speak with your Lo<sup>pps</sup> not doubting but to give your Lo<sup>pps</sup> so good satisfacçon herein, that you will not deny me this sūme at this time. I am

Your Lord<sup>pps</sup>

Most obedient humble Serv<sup>t</sup>

THO: POTTINGER.

[Addressed] To the Rt Hon<sup>ble</sup> Sr  
Stephen Fox, one of the  
Lords Com<sup>rs</sup> of their Mat<sup>s</sup>  
Treasury.

[Endorsed] 5th Octo: 1692

Agreed to be  
assigned.<sup>1</sup>

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To the Rt Hon<sup>ble</sup> the Lords Com<sup>rs</sup> of their Mat<sup>s</sup> Treasury  
The humble Petiçon of Thomas Pottinger of Belfast Merchant.  
SHEWETH

That since your Lord<sup>pps</sup> have been pleased to order the 103*l* 8*s* to be stopt out of the Officers first Clearings, which your Pet<sup>r</sup> Lent them so freely in the time of his other services to the Army, and has now beene above two yeares out of his money.

Your Pet<sup>rs</sup> humble Request is That your Lord<sup>pps</sup> will be pleased to order the advance of it in ready money to supply his great and present necessities.

And your Pet<sup>r</sup> shall ever pray &c.

[Endorsed] The Peticon of Tho. Pottinger.

To bee deducted when  
the souldiers are paid.  
1692.<sup>1</sup>

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*Copie.*

To the Right Hon<sup>ble</sup> The Lords Co<sup>m</sup>issioners of their Majesties  
Treasury.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR LOPS:

In obedience to your Lo<sup>ps</sup>: Order of Reference upon the Memorial of Mr. Thomas Pottinger (signified unto us by Henry Gay Esq<sup>r</sup> the 11th of Sept<sup>r</sup> last) hereunto annexed, directing us to

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<sup>1</sup> *Treasury Papers*, vol. xx., No. 3.

consider the matter therein contained and to Certify to your Lops: a true State thereof, together with our opinion what is fit to be done therein. Wee humbly Report to your Lops: that on the 8th of August 1691, Wee (with your Lops: approbation) did Constitute the said Thomas Pottinger Agent for Prizes at Belfast, and its Districts, without Salary, but to [be] rewarded for his care & pains according as he should deserve as hath been accustomed to all other Agents, to whom we gave our usual Instructions & particular Directions to find out what Imbezelmments of Prize-Goods had formerly been committed in those Parts. And by his care & diligence he hath made us a return of £5929 11 2 (a Copie of w<sup>ch</sup> is hereunto annexed) which he discovered to have been formerly Imbezeled by Captains & others out of Prizes, 4261*l* 11*s* 2*d* being proved upon oath, as by the Affidavits sworn before the Lord Mayor of Dublin, the Mayor of Carrickfergus & the chief Magistrates of Belfast now remaining in our custody appears. The remainder being 1668*l* 0 0 is the Amount of the Cargo of the Golden Lyon, by computation, according as the rest were sold, proved by the Merchants then on board. But hitherto Wee could never get any of the said moneys from the said Captains or others, by w<sup>ch</sup> means, there being no advantage to their Ma<sup>ty</sup>s We could not grant him any Allowance for his aforesaid Services, only paid 30*l* 5*s* 10*d* for his Charges according to a Bill given in by him. But so soon as anything shall be recovered to the Office, by the Discoveries he has made, which wee are now in prosecution of, Wee shall then think ourselves obliged to Reco<sup>m</sup>end him to your Lops for such Gratification as you shall please to direct.

ROG<sup>R</sup> LANGLEY.  
JONATH JENINGS.  
JO: PARKHURST.  
JAMES VERNON.

PRIZE OFFICE 6*th* Feby  
1693-4.<sup>1</sup>

When your Lops are truly satisfied in the State of my Case, which may be done by the Certificates of the General Officers of the Army & the Lords Justices Report on my Petition, I doubt not but your Lops: will find it equal with some services done by others who have received their Ma<sup>ty</sup>s Bounty & favour, w<sup>ch</sup> is also designed for me, And it being referred to your Lops: whose favour I doubt not, but am willing to make it easy, my being here twice about this hath cost me near 200*l* w<sup>ch</sup> your Lops: may please to reimburse me with what you think fit, and on the whole matter, Considering my Services and Disbursements and what I have done as being Agent of the Prize Office in the North of Ireland, wherein I have discovered due to the King 4261*l* 11*s* 2*d*, Certified & proved by the Accout given the Commiss<sup>rs</sup> And there being one year & halfs Salary due to me, w<sup>ch</sup> is not stated, I humbly refer it to your Lops: to give me what Summ your Lops think fit, out of

<sup>1</sup> *Treasury Papers*, vol. xxvi., No. 31.

the first Sales of Prizes in this Kingdom in full satisfaction of their Mat<sup>ys</sup> favour and bounty designed me for my Services and Disbursements in Ireland, w<sup>ch</sup> during my being Sovereign with the loss of my time & other Expences, was about 1000*l*: As also for my Services as Agent, and the discovery of the above Sum. All which will enable me to pursue my Trade as formerly.

And for ever your Lops: shall receive the Prayer of  
Your Lops: Dutiful Servant

THOMAS POTTINGER.

WHITEHALL TREASURY CHAMBERS  
*September 11th 1693.*

The Lords Comiss<sup>rs</sup> of their Mat<sup>ys</sup> Treasury are pleased to Referr this Memorial to their Ma<sup>ts</sup> Principal Comiss<sup>rs</sup> for Prizes, who are to consider the same and to Certify their Lops: a true State of the Pet<sup>rs</sup> Case together with their opinion what is fit to be done therein.

HEN: GAY.

Tho: Pottinger to Comiss<sup>rs</sup> of Prizes.

[Endorsed] Report of the Principall Com<sup>rs</sup> for  
Prizes in the Case of Mr. Thomas  
Pottinger Agent for Prizes at Belfast  
in Ireland.

With his Memorial & Reference from the Lords of  
the Treasury, and an acc<sup>t</sup> of the Imbezeled Prize Goods  
annexed.

The following few observations refer to other members of King James's Corporation.

"Mark Talbot was a natural son of Richard Talbot Duke of Tyrconnell Lord Lieutenant. He was Lieut.-Colonel of the Earl of Antrim's Foot Regiment, and was member for Belfast in King James's Parliament.

"Sir Neill O'Neill was the eldest son of Sir Henry O'Neill of Killelagh in Killultagh who was created a Baronet by patent in 1666. His brother Sir Daniel became third and last Baronet: he had one sister Rose who married Con Modera O'Neill a captain in Cormack O'Neill's Foot Regiment and from that marriage has descended Charles H. O'Neill who claims to be the present chief of Clandeboye.

"Felix O'Neill was Lieut.-Col. of Cormack O'Neill's Regiment. The latter, Colonel of a Regiment of Infantry, resided at Broughshane, was Sheriff of Antrim in 1687, and representative in Parliament in 1689. Felix is described as of Killelagh or of Drumnavilly, Co. Antrim. He was member for Killileagh and Daniel O'Neill for Lisburn in King James's Parliament. Daniel O'Neill is described as of Belfast."

The Cormack O'Neill repeatedly mentioned here does not appear in the list as one of our Burgesses, but in 1685 Lord Clarendon (*State Letters*, vol. i., p. 67) mentions the employing of Cormack O'Neill to report on the state of the county of Antrim. He resided near Portmore, and had a son called Felix. These accounts from different



sources barely agree with regard at least to residences, but it would be quite impossible to enter farther into the history or genealogy of the O'Neills. Those mentioned are only three out of the six of the name who were Burgesses of Belfast in King James's Parliament. "The Inquisition of attainders of the O'Neills in 1691 has about 100 in number." According to Kirkpatrick (*Presbyterian Loyalty*, p. 421), Neill O'Neill of Belfast was a Presbyterian, which is correct. He was of course not the first here mentioned of the same name in the list of Burgesses. The Baronet, Sir Neill O'Neill, died at Waterford, 8th July, 1690, of the wound he received fighting for King James at the Boyne. He was grandson or great-grandson, as well as I can trace, of the great and unfortunate Sir Brian MacFelim O'Neill of Queen Elizabeth's time.—*Memoirs of the Duke of Berwick*; Ryland's *History of Waterford*.

"A Captain *Thomas M'Naughton* of Colonel Cormack O'Neill's regiment is, in the Inquisition for Attainders, termed of Kiltimurry County of Antrim."

"James Wogan was a Major in the Earl of Antrim's Infantry Regiment."

"James Netterville, Captain. At the Kilkenny Assembly 1646 one of the Commons was Patrick Netterville of *Belfast*."

The name never again appears in connection with the town. Lord Netterville was one of the Lords of that Assembly. He married, in 1661, a daughter of Thady O'Hara of Crebilly, in the county of Antrim, and had four sons, which may possibly explain the cause of the introduction of the name among King James's Burgesses. (See D'Alton's *Army List*, vol i., p. 332; and Lodge's *Peerage*, vol. iv., p. 216.)

"Martin Gernon of Crooked Stone Co. Antrim, and Nicholas of Clough, outlawed 1691."

William Dobbin and Humphrey Dobbin are both on this list of temporary Burgesses.

"William Dobbin was son of Lieutenant James Dobbin of Duneane and married Mary Eccles about 1640 . . . he had considerable business connection with Belfast. Humphrey was his brother, and father of Rigby Dobbin of Belfast, Duneane, and Carrickfergus."<sup>1</sup>

"At the Court of Claims Captain Wm. Dobbin was allowed an Equity of Redemption on a Mortgage of County Antrim lands forfeited by Captain Peter Dobbin. Elizabeth a daughter of Captain

---

<sup>1</sup> Supplied by Mr. Leonard Dobbin, a descendant of the family, Lee Road, Cork.

William was married about the year 1723 to George Macartney father by a former wife of the celebrated Lord Macartney.

"Peter Dobbin was a Captain in Cormack O'Neill's Regiment. The Captain appears from his Christian name and otherwise to have been of the Carrickfergus line, and is accordingly described in the inquisition for his attainder as of Drumferagh Co. of Antrim, within which Co. there were outlawed Thomas Dobbin of Clough, and Henry Dobbin of Ballynacard."—*D'Alton*, vol. ii., p. 370.

Martin Gernon was one of the thirty-five Burgesses of Belfast. This widespread family had found its way to the county of Antrim, and "Martin Gernon of Crookedstone claimed various interests affecting the lands of Sir Neill O'Neill in Antrim. Dismissed."—*D'Alton*, p. 132.

Peter Knowles has already been mentioned as Collector of the Customs at Belfast, appointed by King James, and so prominent in the affairs of George Macartney. He was very well entitled to be a Burgess. But the greater number of them neither desired nor regarded the office to which they were chosen.

#### MEMBERS OF PARLIAMENT FOR BELFAST FROM 1613 TILL THE UNION.

- 1613. Sir John Blennerhasset, Knight.  
George Trevillian, Esq.
- 1639. Sir William Wrey, Knight and Baronet.  
George Rawdon, Esq.
- 1661. William Knight, Esq., Counsellor at Law.  
Henry Davys, Esq.
- 1692. James Macartney, Esq.  
George Macartney, Esq.
- 1695. Honble. Charles Chichester.  
James Macartney, Esq.
- 1703. William Crafford, Merchant.  
William Cairnes of Dublin, Merchant.
- 1707. William Crafford.  
Samuel Ogle, Esq., in place of W. Cairnes, deceased.
- 1713. Robert Moore, Esq.  
Anthony Atkinson, Esq.
- 1715. Hon. Capel Moore.  
George Macartney. Lost their seats, and by another Indenture the Hon. John Itchingam Chichester and George Macartney made their election good.
- 1721. George Macartney, Esq.  
George Macartney, Jun., Esq., in place of the Hon. J. I. Chichester, deceased.
- 1725. Hon. John Chichester.  
George Macartney, Esq.
- 1727. Hon. David John Barry.  
George Macartney, Esq.

1745. Hon. John Chichester.  
George Macartney, Esq.
1747. George Macartney, Esq.  
William Macartney, Esq.
1757. William Macartney, Esq.  
Hon. Arthur Barry, in room of George Macartney, deceased.
1761. Hon. John Chichester.  
John Ludford, Esq.
1769. Hon. Henry Skeffington.  
Alexander Crookshank, Esq., Judge.
1776. Hon. Henry Skeffington.  
Barry Yelverton, Esq.
1777. Hon. Henry Skeffington.  
Alexander Crookshank, Esq., in place of Barry Yelverton, who made his election for Carrickfergus.
1784. Hon. Henry Skeffington.  
Hon. Joseph Hewitt.
1790. Hon. Henry Skeffington.  
Sir William Godfrey.
1797. Right Hon. Lord Spencer Chichester, second son of the Marquis of Donegall.  
George Crookshank, Esq.
1798. George Crookshank, Esq.  
Alexander Hamilton, Esq.
1800. Edward May, Esq.  
John Congreve, Jun., Esq.

These are the names and dates of appointment of all the Parliamentary representatives of Belfast from the "raising" of the Corporation, in 1613, till the Union, on the 1st January, 1801. As in the case of the Sovereigns, many little choice bits of history surround some of these names; many remarkable or stirring events and some elections occurred during this long period which might interest many, and deserve special regard. There are some observations in the text having relation thereto, which, with the names here set down, must suffice. Alexander Hamilton was one of the last members of the United Parliament, respecting whom there is this notice—

"Alex<sup>r</sup> Hamilton was a member of the Irish Parl<sup>t</sup> as Representative of Belfast at the time the Union was sought to be carried; and the Earl of Belfast in whom was the patronage of that borough favouring the movement, Mr. Hamilton resigned his seat and the lucrative office of Cursitor of the Exchequer rather than support that measure."  
—D'Alton's *Army List*, vol. i., p. 190.

NO. XII.—LIST OF THE REFUGEES FROM DOWN AND ANTRIM  
AT THE REVOLUTION, AND WHICH IS HEADED—

“A List of such Protestants of Ireland as are lately fled out of the kingdom for safety of their lives, and the yearly value of their Estates, now either sequestered by the Papists in Ireland, or so kept from the said Protestants that they neither do nor can receive profit out of their Estates.”—*See p. 163.*

Name.	Place.	Estate.	
		Real.	Personal.
		£	£
Adair, Patrick, Gent. ... ..	Belfast ...	106	
Adare, Robt., Esqr. ... ..	„ ...	400	
Adare, Robt., ... ..	Balimena ...	800	
Butle, David, Gent. ... ..	Belfast ...	{ 40 60	
		By office.	
Massereene, Ld. Visct., ... ..	„ „ ...	4340	
Hugh Maxwell ... ..	Down ...	230	
George Maxwell, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	300	
Margt. Maxwell ... ..	Finebrogue ...	250	
Jo. Moore, Gent. ... ..	Lisburn ...	210	
		By office.	
Wm. Montgomery, Gent. ... ..	Down ...	280	
Mount Alexander, Earl ... ..	„ ...	{ 650 500	
		By office.	
Dan M'Neil ... ..	„ ...	120	
O'Hara, Chas., Esqr. ... ..	Antrim ...	936	
Price, Nicholas, Esqr. ... ..	Down ...	269	
Rawdon, Sir A., Bart. ... ..	„ ...	2200	
Redmond, Wm. Gent. ... ..	„ ...	110	
Ross, Jas., Esq. ... ..	Portavo ...	600	
Rowley, Hercules, ... ..	„ ...	{ 800 400	
		By office.	
Rowley, Hugh, Gent. ..	Summerhill	200	
Shaw, Wm., ... ..	Antrim ...	120	
Shaw, Wm., Esqr. ... ..	Down ...	700	
Skeffington, Clotworthy, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	660	
Stewart, Chas., Esq. ... ..	Co. Antrim...	500	
Upton, Arthur, Esqr. ... ..	Antrim ...	800	
C. Ward, Esq. ... ..	Down ...	700	
Christopher Carleton, Esq. ... ..	Co. Antrim...	300	105
		By office.	
Jno. Chichester ... ..	Wexford ...	200	
Jo. Chichester, Capt. ... ..	Belfast ...	100	250
Kath. Chichester, daughter Earl Donegall	„ ...	250	
Earl Donegall ... ..	„ ...	2700	
Donegall, Countess Dowager ... ..	„ ...	1200	
Franklin, Sir Wm. ... ..	„ ...	2380	
Geo. Macartney, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	400	
Jas. Macartney, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	...	150
George Macartney, Merchant ... ..	„ ...	300	150
Edwd. Pottinger, Gent. ... ..	„ ...	100	115

LIST OF REFUGEES.—*Continued.*

Name.	Place.	Estate.	
		Real.	Personal.
		£	£
Ward, Mary, Widow ... ..	Down ...	400	
Ward, Bernard, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	500	
Ward, Sarah, Widow ... ..	„ ...	160	
Warren, Wm., Esq. ... ..	„ ...	500	
West, Henry, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	500	
Bailey, Sam., Gent. ... ..	„ ...	250	
Bailey, Sarah, Widow ... ..	„ ...	100	
Bret, Wm., Gent. ... ..	„ ...	160	
Brown, Wm., Gent. ... ..	Island Magee ...	120	
Brice, Rand., Esq. ... ..	Hillhall ...	300	
Blackwood, Jo., Gent. ... ..	Bangor ...	300	
Close, Rich <sup>d</sup> ., Gent. ... ..	Down ...	300	
Sir R. Colville, Knt. ... ..	„ ...	2500	
Jo. Cromry, Gent. ... ..	Antrim ...	300	
Jo. Dawson, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	300	
Rob. Dobbs, Jun <sup>r</sup> ., Esq. ... ..	„ ...	150	
Jo. Echlin, Esq. ... ..	Down ...	350	
Robt. Echlin ... ..	„ ...	152	250
Henry Echlin ... ..	„ ...	110	
Wm. Fairly, Gent. ... ..	„ ...	120	
Jo. Fryer, Gent. ... ..	„ ...	200	
Jo. Hadock, Gent. ... ..	Hillsborough ...	110	
Edw <sup>d</sup> . Harrison, Esq <sup>r</sup> . ... ..	Antrim ...	800	
Hamilton, James, Esq <sup>r</sup> . ... ..	Newcastle ...	1500	
Hamilton, James, Esq <sup>r</sup> . ... ..	Tullimore ...	1052	182
Hamilton, Jo., ... ..	Down ...	458	110
Hamilton, Jas., Clerk ... ..	Bangor ...	250	
Hamilton, Pat., Esq. ... ..	Down ...	200	
Hamilton, Jas., Esq. ... ..	Cumber ...	500	
Hamilton, Wm., ... ..	Killinchy ...	150	
Hamilton, Gavin, ... ..	Down ...	150	
Jo. Hawkins, Esq. ... ..	„ ...	1120	
Robt. Hawkins, Gent. ... ..	„ ...	200	
Mary Hill, Widow ... ..	„ ...	800	
Wm. Hill, Esq <sup>r</sup> . ... ..	„ ...	3500	
Robt. Houston, Esq <sup>r</sup> . ... ..	Antrim ...	600	
Jo. Johnston, Mercht. ... ..	Lisburn ...	160	
Sir Jo. Magill, Bart. ... ..	Down (?) ...	1900	
Hugh Magill, Esq <sup>r</sup> . ... ..	„ ...	768	
Arthur Row, Esq <sup>r</sup> . ... ..	Antrim ...	280	
Ralph Smith ... ..	„ ...	300	

The number of the children in each of the families of the refugees has been omitted.

It is but an incomplete list of those who fled in 1688. They are all from Down and Antrim except John Chichester of Wexford, who went off, it is probable, with the rest of his family. There is no place of abode set down opposite the names of the Earl of Donegall, of the other Chichesters, of Sir Wm. Franklin, of the Macartneys, nor of Edward Pottinger; but they were all of Belfast. The list is interesting, as showing the estimated value at the Revolution of the estates

of the refugees. It is in the *Pinkerton MSS.*, the reference being simply, "Trin. Coll., F. 4. 3." Similar lists have already been published, but the value of the property of those who fled has not been inserted in any of them, though even as here set forth the estimate of such cannot, it is probable, be strictly relied on.

NO. XIII.—THE PLACES WHERE SCHOMBERG'S ARMY LAY IN THE  
WINTER OF 1689–90, AND WHICH IS HEADED—

"The following is the list of their Majesties' Forces now in the Kingdom of Ireland, and where quartered."—*See p. 175.*

## Regiments.

## Where Quartered.

Schomberg's.....	Lurgan, Kilultagh, Glenavy, Camlin, Kilmacavit, Tollerush, Killeleagh, Killead.
Sir John Lanier's.....	Downpatrick and Lecale.
Coll. Villier's and.....	} Donaghadee, Ballywalter, Ballyhalbert.
Coll. Russel's.....	
L. Hewit's late Regiment...	Ineshargy, Ballyvestor, Gray Abbey.
Coll. Coys'.....	Killileagh, Killinchy. Ardmillan, Newtown, Kirkdonnel, Knock, and Breda.
Coll. Coys'.....	Strangford, Ballyculter, Killecliffe, Dunsford, Port-a-Ferry.
Longston's.....	Castle-Fin, Cavan, Stranorland.
Lord Cavendish's.....	Drum, Derriaghy, Malone.
Harbord's Troop Artillery	Comber, Kilmuddy, Belfast.
Provost Marshall.....	Lisburn.
Coll. Earle's.....	Six Mile Water. 200 at Belturbet.
De la Melloniere's.....	Dromore, Hillsborough.
Camuon's.....	Legacorry, Drumalley, Castlereagh.
De la Calimot's.....	Mountjoy, Dungannon.

## INNISKILLING AND LONDONDERRY FORCES.

Col. Wolsey's and.....	} Belturbet.
Sir Albert Cunningham's	
Coll. Wynn's.....	Ballyshannon, Armagh, Monaghan.
Hamilton's.....	Belturbet.
Lloyd's.....	Monaghan, Glasslough, Tynan, Caledon.
White's.....	Inniskilling.
Mitchelburn's.....	Loughbrickland, Newry.
St. John's.....	Armagh, Benburb.
Tiffin's.....	Ballyshannon, Donegall, Belleek.

## THE DANISH FORCES.

Guards.....	Doagh, Belli-Carey, Rashee.
Queen's.....	Donegore, Kilbreed, Wihtin. (?)
Prince Frederick's.....	Larne, Cairn-castle, Killoughter.



Prince Christian's.....	Glenarm, Solor, Ardelinis, Laid, and Templeoughter.
Prince George's.....	Armo, Billy, Derrykighan.
Zeeland.....	Coleraine, Killowen, Macosquin.
Jutland.....	Loughell, Dunaghie, Killagan.
Fuhne (?).....	Killuca, Garvaghy, Magherafelt.
Adenburgh.....	Skerrie, Rakhaven.

## DRAGOONS.

Royal Regiment.....	Isle of Magee.
Levison's.....	Moir, Magheralin, Warringstown.

## FOOT.

Dutch Guards and.....	} Antrim 250.
Greben's Regiment.....	
Princess Anne's.....	} Belturbet 250.
Brigadier Stuart's.....	
	Narrow Water, Greencastle, Rostrevor, Annalong.
Sir Josh Hanmore's.....	Gilford and adjacent places.
Wharton's.....	Waringstown, Clare, and adjacent places.
Earl of Meath's.....	} Lisburn.
Lord Kingston's.....	
Hasting's.....	Belfast.
Hamilton's.....	Clowney.
Bellasy's.....	Carrickfergus. 150 to guard the passage at Rathlin.
Lord Lisburn's.....	Ballinderry and Portmore.
Herbert's.....	Rathvillan, Ballynahinch.
Deering's.....	Portadown.
Earl of Drogheda's.....	Tanderagee.

## HORSE.

Jewell's.....	Magherahoghill, Connor, Kells, Grange.
Donoy's.....	Ballymoney, Fenvoy, Maghereshesk.
Leeslet (?).....	Dunluce and adjacent places.

Prince of Wirtemberg's Head Quarters at Galgorm Castle. The General Officers at Ballymena.

Duke of Schomberg's Head Quarters at Lisburn.

Every Regiment not full at the opening of the Campaign will be broken. Thus each Regiment of Foot will contain 800 men, each of Horse 300, affording more than 35,000 men. Enough to reduce Ireland without other help than horses and carriages for provisions.—*Pinkerton MSS.*

No. XIV.—NAMES OF ALL THE PEOPLE IN BELFAST WHO PAID  
THE HEARTH MONEY TAX IN 1666.—*See p. 299.*

The following list comprises the actual names of all the inhabitants of Belfast required to pay the Hearth Money Tax in the above year. It will be remembered that, as mentioned in the text, if there be a few included outside the bounds of the town, there was probably an equivalent number within it, who, from having no hearths, from poverty or other exceptional cause, were exempted from any payment. The list in its entirety therefore may be taken to represent the population of the town and the names of the inhabitants at the period mentioned, and is a truly interesting and valuable record of the state of Belfast in the year 1666. The whole sum raised in Belfast by the Hearth Money Tax at the time was only £28 10s. 0d.

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE OF IRELAND.

Certified copy of a portion of a Record in the Public Record Office of Ireland, entitled, "Hearth Money Roll, County of Antrim, 1666."

BARRONY OF BELFFAST.

PARISH OF BELFFAST.

Occupiers' Names.	Hearthes.	Sume of Money.
The Earle of Donnegall ... ..	fforty	xxxx. iiiil
Mr. Edward Renalls ... ..	two	iii/
George M'Cartney, Esq. ... ..	two	iii/
Mr. William Wareing ... ..	ffoure	vii/
Mr. John Leithes, Sen. ... ..	twoe	iii/
Mr. George Martin ... ..	twoe	iii/
Mr. Hugh Doake ... ..	twoe	iii/
Mr. John Rigbee ... ..	one	i/
Mr. John Leathes, Jun. ... ..	one	i/
Mr. George M'Cartney ... ..	twoe	iii/
Mr. ffranks Thetford ... ..	twoe	iii/
Mr. Ralph Sanders ... ..	twoe	iii/
Capt. Burrell ... ..	one	i/
Robert Douglas ... ..	one	i/
William Ratcliffe ... ..	one	i/
William Hall ... ..	one	i/
Richard Pomfrey ... ..	one	i/
William Bryan ... ..	one	i/
John M'Whorke ... ..	one	i/
Widdow Neagus ... ..	one	i/
Peter Jones ... ..	two	iii/
John Hudson ... ..	one	i/
Richard Pope ... ..	one	i/

Occupiers' Names.	Hearthies.	Sume of Money.
Alexand <sup>r</sup> Cunning .. ..	one	i/
William George ... ..	one	i/
Henry Car[ ]an ... ..	one	i/
Roger Jones ... ..	one	i/
Robert Be[ ]ke ... ..	one	i/
Edward Bailye ... ..	one	i/
John fforbush ... ..	one	i/
John Delap ... ..	one	i/
Walter P[ ]aston ... ..	one	i/
James [ ]artin, Mealeman ... ..	one	i/
William Burke ... ..	one	i/
John Crossely ... ..	one	i/
Daniell ffrissell ... ..	one	i/
George Agnew ... ..	one	i/
Abraham Runceby ... ..	one	i/
James Allane ... ..	one	i/
Robert Quinne ... ..	one	i/ 9l 02s
Joseph Storrie ... ..	one	i/
William Cooper ... ..	one	i/
John Magowne ... ..	one	i/
William Vanderhoven ... ..	one	i/
John Sleman ... ..	one	i/
William Pearceye ... ..	one	i/
Michael Harrison, Esq. ... ..	ffoure	vii/
Capt. Beverley ... ..	three	v/
Mr. Stewtly ... ..	one	i/
John Arbuckles ... ..	one	i/
John Bayles ... ..	one	i/
George Donkan ... ..	one	i/
Robert Pavior ... ..	one	i/
Thomas Stewart ... ..	twoe	iii/
John Clugston, Sen. ... ..	three	v/
Richard Burnes ... ..	one	i/
James Martin, Sadler ... ..	one	i/
Robert Martin ... ..	one	i/
Charles Whitelocke .. ..	two	iii/
Pierce Walshe ... ..	one	i/
John Bigger ... ..	one	i/
Michael Bigger ... ..	one	i/
James Bigger ... ..	one	i/
James Chambers ... ..	one	i/
Thomas Reades ... ..	one	i/
Widdow Potts ... ..	one	i/
Mr. Hugh Eccles ... ..	three	v/
William Henderson ... ..	one	i/
Widdow Watterson ... ..	one	i/
William Gibbs ... ..	one	i/
Ralph ffeaster ... ..	one	i/
Robert Hunter ... ..	one	i/

Occupiers' Names.	Hearthes.	Sume of Money.
Andrew M'Culloch ... ..	one	i/
Michael Partridge ... ..	one	i/
Widdow Gallop ... ..	one	i/
Andrew Rea ... ..	one	i/
Gabriell Homes ... ..	one	i/
James Taylor ... ..	one	i/
George Williamson ... ..	one	i/
John M'Cartney ... ..	one	i/
James M'Adam ... ..	one	i/
John Speere ... ..	one	i/
Andrew Bromfield ... ..	one	i/
John Hunter ... ..	one	i/
Daniell Leech ... ..	one	i/
Nicholas Gardner... ..	three	v/
Matthew Tate ... ..	one	i/
George Hall ... ..	one	i/
Andrew Knowles... ..	one	i/
John Traquire ... ..	one	i/
James Christye ... ..	one	i/
Alexandr Thompson ... ..	twoe	iii/
Daniell Christian... ..	one	i/
John Hadden ... ..	one	i/
George Lester ... ..	one	i/
Laurence Crossely ... ..	one	i/
John Williamson... ..	one	i/
francis fleming ... ..	one	i/
Henry Tayte ... ..	one	i/
John Black ... ..	one	i/
William Corryne ... ..	one	i/
Thomas Kerrone ... ..	one	i/
John Shanks ... ..	one	i/
Alexandr M'Cartney ... ..	one	i/
Patricke A. Heale .. ..	one	i/
Daniell Carrett ... ..	one	i/
Simon Thetford ... ..	one	i/
Marcus Gardner ... ..	one	i/
Thomas Heasley ... ..	one	i/
Edward Stewart ... ..	one	i/
John Martin, Killman ... ..	one	i/
John Whitlocke ... ..	one	i/ 8l 12s.
John M'Illywan ... ..	one	i/
Robert Skinner ... ..	one	i/
Henry Thetford ... ..	one	i/
John Wilson, feltmaker ... ..	one	i/
Henry Seaton ... ..	one	i/
Thomas Bell ... ..	one	i/
John Horner ... ..	one	i/
Rowland Sharper... ..	one	i/
Thomas Smith ... ..	one	i/

Occupiers' Names.		Hearthes.	Sume of Money.
Widdow Partridge	...	one	i/
Mr. James Sparkes	...	one	i/
Mr. John Barton	...	three	v/
William Tompson	...	one	i/
Robert Jackson	...	one	i/
John Christian	...	one	i/
Robert M'Cree	...	one	i/
John Lenox	...	one	i/
William Heasleton	...	one	i/
Thomas Quynne	...	one	i/
Adam Williamson	...	one	i/
David Donoge	...	one	i/
David Tompson	...	one	i/
George Snowden	...	one	i/
John leythes, Jun.	...	one	i/
Thomas Gravener	...	one	i/
Mr. John Stewart	...	one	i/
Mr. William Taylor	...	twoe	iii/
Widdow Mankin	...	one	i/
Henry Wilkison	...	one	i/
William Oakes	...	one	i/
James Reede	...	one	i/
Hugh Campbell	...	one	i/
John Roger	...	one	i/
Richard Ashmor	...	one	i/
William Mickell	...	one	i/
Thomas Peasley	...	one	i/
Katherine Archer	...	one	i/
Mr. George Stothert	...	one	i/
Mr. John Harris	...	three	v/
Mr. Thomas Barron	...	one	i/
Thomas Gill	...	one	i/
James Heyes	...	one	i/
Widdow Vicker	...	one	i/
John Rogers, Thatcher	...	one	i/
Archibald Moore	...	one	i/
Andrew Mahoole	...	one	i/
Thomas Lightfoote	...	one	i/
Henry Clarke	...	one	i/
James Miller	...	one	i/
Robert Spey	...	one	i/
Robert Morra	...	one	i/
Henry Dickson	...	one	i/
Peter Taylor	...	one	i/
John Poole	...	one	i/
James Homes	...	one	i/
John Deane	...	one	i/
Roger leathes	...	one	i/
Robert Taylor	...	one	i/

Occupiers' Names.	Hearthes.	Sume of Money.
John Ellison ... ..	one	i/
John Clugston, Jun. ... ..	one	i/
William Martin .. ...	one	i/
Paule Reade ... ..	one	i/
Robert Smith ... ..	three	v/
Lewis Tompson ... ..	two	iii/
George M'Night ... ..	one	i/
William Thom ... ..	two	iii/
Thomas Hodgkinson ... ..	three	v/
Arthur Houghton ... ..	two	iii/
William Moore ... ..	one	i/
Alexandr Sinkler ... ..	[ ]ne	i/
John Martin ... ..	one	i/ 8l 06s.
William Anderson ... ..	two	iii/
William Smith ... ..	two	iii/
Mrs Herrington ... ..	one	i/
Josias Martin ... ..	two	iii/
Gilbert M'Garragh ... ..	two	iii/
John Agnew ... ..	one	i/
Hugh Gallagher ... ..	one	i/
Thomas Cranston ... ..	one	i/
John King ... ..	one	i/
Adam Kearnes ... ..	one	i/
John Drenan ... ..	one	i/
James Mahoole ... ..	one	i/
John M'ffarran ... ..	one	i/
William Cowan ... ..	one	i/
John M'Bryde ... ..	one	i/
Mathew Rowan ... ..	one	i/
William M'Cronell ... ..	one	i/
Obadiah Groaves ... ..	one	i/
John Cotter ... ..	one	i/
Thomas Blane ... ..	one	i/
Patricke Agnew ... ..	one	i/

I certify that the foregoing is a true and authentic copy made pursuant to the statute, 30 & 31 Vic., ch. 70.

J. DIGGES LA TOUCHE,  
The Assistant Deputy Keeper of the Records.

14th October, 1873.



NO. XV.—COPY OF THE PATENT TO SIR A. CHICHESTER, AND THE NAMES OF THE TOWNLANDS, &C., WITH THEIR DERIVATIONS.—*See p. 78.*

The following is a copy of the first Patent of Belfast and its environs to Sir Arthur Chichester in 1603. As is known, several renewals of this Patent took place subsequently, to remedy defective titles or to make the grant more assured. The townlands, however, did not change, except from the frequent variations in orthography which they were constantly receiving, but that not so great as to render them unrecognisable. The derivations or translations of the names from this, the oldest copy, are subjoined, obtained from that able Irish scholar, Mr. Hennessy, of the Record Office, Dublin. The Patent begins—

“Sir Arthur Chichester Knt Privy Councillor To hold for ever as of the Castle of Knockfergus in common soccage for all other services, rents, and demands whatsoever—

“Granted to him by Patent dated 5th Nov. 1603, which at his request was surrendered and a new Patent passed—

“The Castle of Bealfaste or Belfast, with the Appurtenants & Hereditaments spiritual and temporal situate in the Lower Clandeboye, late in the possession or custody of Sir Ralph Lane Knt. deceased, dated 6th June 40th Elizabeth.

“The Tuogh of Le Fall, & Moyellon, Moylon, or Mylon, containing the sixteen towns or townlands of Ballicolo, Ballydownmory, Ballietan, Ballynitollaghan, Tuaughtie, Balliodran, Ballynvally, Ballyncholly, Balliogoman, Ballydownefine, Ballymignunge, Ardoyne, Ballyard-sellagh, Ballingarrie, Ballwallynymrahare, and Ballivister, which extend from the river Lagan on the south to the mountain Alt. M'Coye on the north, and from a place called Tollglass on the west to the top of the mountain Alt. Comy towards the East. Free Fishing in the river Lagan.

“The Circuit or Extent of Land called the Tinament, viz. the towns or townlands called Ballyclony, Ballynyeulnytry, Ballyculcallagy, Ballynygaffyny, Ballyfaighnamonyny, Ballyneaguiver, Ballymollagh-Imany, Ballylaganile, Ballycrosse-Itawnassa, Ballyoghaghan, Balliskeighog-Inerla, Ballylistytollard, Ballyviccustullie, Ballingowlan, Ballikeyle, Ballylish-Igullrien, Ballygornyard, Balliglangoremy, Ballyarthechill, and Ballyvasduine, all parcel of the said Tinament, and extending from the river Glasbridden on the East to the Glynn of Altcomy on the West, and from a river on the south which ebbs and flows between Bealfast and Carrickfergus to a place called Ballyvascony, and to the river of Aghnatallagh on the North. The ruinous Castle of Cloghnycastally. The ruinous Stone House of Ballivastonye.

The ruinous church of Shankhill, with the half-town Gallinagh adjoining, and half the town of Drumore all parcels of the same Tinament.

“The Circuit or Extent of land called Carmony or Carnemony, parcel of said Tinament, containing the ten towns or townlands of Ballyreneny, Tollard, the White Abbey, Ballydownanny, Ballilagh-Ilyne, Ballycairaghfarny, Ballycullo, Balliardnasowle, Ballyhanry, Bally-Imulduffe, & Ballivosyne, which extend on the west from the river Glassbridden to the river Ballylinnie at the Three mile water on the East, and on the south from the river that flows between Carrickfergus and Belfast to the river Aghsolas on the North. The Town of the Cowle and a ruinous house called the White Abbey and a townland adjoining parcels of the Tinament. The portion or extent of land called the Earls Meadow, with the like circuit or extent called Munkstown, containing six Townlands, viz., three called Ballynymanagh, two called Carnetall, and one Ballyjordan, which lands called Munkstown extend from the river Ballyline on the west to the bounds of Carrickfergus on the east, and from the sea shore on the South to Carnshallagh on the north.

“Dated at Hampton Court 29th Decr., 1603. Pat. 9 May 1604. No Rent Reserved.”

Lodge's *Index*, K. James I., 88.

The first word to be explained is Ballyrecoolegalgie, which is the ancient name of the townland in which Belfast is situated.

**BALLYRECOOLEGALGIE.**—As the word *bally* prefixed to most of the townland names in this list is merely used to express “the town (or townland) of so and so,” the name of the place was simply *Re-coolegalgie*. The first syllable (*Re*) represents either *rea* or *reidh*, a mountain flat, or *rath*, which is frequently found written *Ray*, *Re*, and *Ree* in northern topographical names. *Coole-Galgie* signifies “Galgach's Corner,” or recess. The name Galgach should probably be Calgach, for this Irish name is Latinised “Galgacus” by Tacitus (*Agricola*, c. 29). And there is no great difficulty in supposing that the same person who gave the name of *Doire-Calgaigh* (Colgach's oak grove) to Derry may have been the same from whom *Cul-Galgie* was named.

**STRANDMILLIS.**—In Irish, *srathan-milis*, the “sweet *srathan*,” or callow. *Srathan* is the diminutive of *srath*; Latin, *stratum*; and *milis* (pronounced *milish*) corresponds to the Latin “melleus.” As *srath* in Irish signifies a callow, or flat stretch along a river, so *srathan-milis* would mean a “small, sweet-grassed river-sward.”

**BALLICOLLO.**—“Colla's Town.” Colla was a common name in the family of the MacDonnells of Antrim.

**BALLYDOWNMORY.**—The old name of this place was Dun-Muiredhaigh, or “Muiredhach's Fort.” The word Bally (Irish, *baile*), prefixed to this and the other names in the list of townlands signifies *locus*, place, or situation.

**BALLIETAN.**—“Aedan's place.” The name Aedan, often written Etan, is very common in ancient Irish pedigrees. No doubt can be

entertained that Ballietan is so called from having been the residence of some person so named.

**BALLYNITOLLAGHAN.**—In Irish, “the *bally* (or place) of the *tulachans*” (or hillocks). *Tulach* means a hill, or hillock; and *tulachan* is the diminutive form of the word.

**TUAUGHTIE.**—This name, in Irish, would represent “the country of Eochaid.” *Tuath*, in Irish, means not only what is expressed in Latin by *plebs* or *populus*, but also the county occupied by a tribe. But in the Chichester Patent the name is written *Fuaughtie*, which would signify the “Wood of Eochaid,” from *Fidh* (“a wood”), corrupted to *Fu* (cf. Fuerty, County Roscommon, in Irish *Fidh-ard*, “high wood,” and the *Fews*, County Armagh, from *fedha*, plural of *fidh*, a wood).

**BALLYODRAN.**—“Odran’s town.” Odran (the diminutive of *odar*, “brown,” or “dark grey,”) was a pretty common name anciently. Several saints of the name are mentioned in the Calendars and Martyrologies. The readers of the *Life of St. Patrick* will remember the fate of his charioteer Odran, who devoted himself for the saint.

**BALLYNVALLY.**—“The town of the *bealach* (or pass).” Bealach, though strictly speaking a “pass,” was also applied to a highway.

**BALLYNCHOLLY.**—The “town of the boar,” or Boar’s Town. From *torc*, another word signifying “boar,” are derived the names of many places in Ireland, such as Kanturk and Kinturk, “boar’s head.”

**BALLIOGOMAN.**—“O’Goman’s Town.” The surname O’Goman is not at present found in the district, having disappeared, probably by translation into some English name of supposed similar meaning, like so many of the other old Irish family names.

**BALLYDOWNFINE.**—This name was pronounced Bally-doon-feeny, and signified the “Town (or place) of Feenay’s *dun* or fort.”

**BALLYMIGNUNGE.**—The oldest Anglicised form of this name is Ballymynunge. It signifies the town (or townland) “of the green *min* (or *meen*),” which latter word is applied to a smooth, fertile spot. Meenglas, Lord Lifford’s residence in Donegal, also has the same signification.

**ARDOYNE.**—“Eoghan’s Height (or Hill).” The same name is written Ardoyne in Wicklow, but Ardowen in Mayo.

**BALLYARDESELLAGH.**—The bally (or town) of Ardsallagh, which latter name signifies “Dirty Hill, or Sally Hill.” There are many places in Ireland called Ardsallagh.

**BALLINGARRIE.**—A very common townland name, signifying the “town of the garden.”

**BALLIVALLYNYMRAHARE.**—The town of the Friars’ pass.

**BALLYVISTER.**—This name is written *Ballymister* in the Chichester Patent—the form Ballyvister in the grant to Bassett, and in the Chancery Inquisition. The form *Ballyvister* has arisen from the aspiration of the *m* in the old name (*m* aspirated = *mh* = *v*). But the meaning of the name is not clear.

**BALLYCLONEY.**—“The town (or townland) of *Cloney*.” There are several townland names in Ireland terminating in Cloney, or Clooney,

as well as many others called Cloney, Clooney, Clonea, Clonee, and Cloonee—all having the same meaning. In some cases, as in that of Clooney, in the parish of Clondermot, near Londonderry, the name means the “meadow” of some thing or person represented by *I*. But in other cases *Cloney* represents “a place abounding in *cluains* or meadows.”

BALLYNYCULNYTRY.—The “town of the lower recesses.”

BALLYCULLCALLAGY.—“The town of Calgach’s *Cul* (or recess).” This name is unquestionably connected with that of Ballyrecoolegalgie (the first in the list, the *Coole-galgie* of which is the same as the *cull-callagy* of the present name). It may therefore be safely assumed that *Galgie* = *Calgaigh*.

BALLYNYGAFFYNY.—This name is plainly written *Ballynygalliny* in the Chichester Patent. It would be “the town of the girls (or maidens).”

BALLYFAIGHNAMONYNY.—The “*bally* of the fair-green of the little bogs,” but it is also used to express a soft sward.

BALLYNEAGNIVER (Ballyneagnivre in the Chichester Patent).—This name is so corruptly written that it would be hazardous to attempt any explanation of it. The concluding part *niver* seems to represent the Irish *an ibhair*, “of the yew.” But it is very difficult to explain the meaning of *Ballyneag*.

BALLYMOLLAGH-IMANY.—The “town of the summit (or hill-top) of O’Maine.” Maine was a proper name pretty general in ancient times. One of the sons of Niall of the Nine Hostages was called Maine. It was also the name of the chieftain from whom the tribe name of Hy-Many was adopted by the O’Kellys of Roscommon.

BALLYNISILLAN.—“The town of the willows.” *Sailean* (pronounced *sillan*) is properly a diminutive, like *saileóg* (pronounced *sillog*), of *sail*, a sallow or willow. Cf. Latin, *salix*; Manx, *shell*; and Welsh, *helgg*.

BALLYLAGANIE.—The “town of the hollow of the rock.” *Lag*, *log*, or *lug*, means a hollow, and seems to be the root of the name “Lagan.”

BALLYCROSSE-ITAWNASSER.—Written *Ballycrosse-Itannassa* in the Chichester Patent, “the town of O’Tanasa’s Cross.”

BALLYOGHAGAN.—“Eochagan’s Town;” so called apparently from some person named Eochagan. The Four Masters, at A.D. 882, record the death of “Eochagan, son of Aedh, King of Ulidia.”

BALLYSKEIGHOG-IN-ERLA.—“The *bally* of the Earl’s hawthorn,” but is also used to express the tree on which it grows. This name may probably commemorate the place where the Earl of Ulster, William de Burgo, was assassinated in 1333.

BALLYLISTYTOLLARD.—The “*bally* of the fort of the high-front house.” This curious name is composed of *Bally* (a “place”), *lis* (a fort or inclosure).

BALLYVICCUSTULLIE.—“MacCustullie’s town,” or “MacOsdlebha’s town.” As the name MacCostelloe has been derived from one Osdlebha, whose name was De Angelo, or Nangle (Four Masters, 1193), MacCustullie may be also similarly derived.

BALLINGOWLAN.—The “*bally* of the little *gabhlán* (pronounced gowlán), or fork.” *Gabhlán* is the diminutive of *gabhal* (a fork, branch, or division, generally applied in the cases of trees, roads, and rivers). Another and more modern form of the diminutive is *gaibhlín* (pronounced goleen), which enters into the composition of several Irish topographical names.

BALLIKEYLE.—“Narrow town.” This word means slender, narrow, and enters into the formation of numerous names of places in Ireland, and is generally used to express a long, narrow strip of land, and also a “strait.”

BALLYLISH IGULLRIEN.—The “town of O’Golrian’s *lis* (or abode).”

BALLYGORNWARD.—I don’t know what this name signifies, unless it is a modern form of the “bally of the round hill of the offering”—*i.e.*, that had been presented to some church.

BALLYGLANGOREMLY.—This name must be explained either as “the town of Gormlaith’s glen,” or Gairmledhaigh’s (or Gormly’s) glen. Gormlaith was a female name, but Gairmledhaigh, from whom the Cinel-Moain derived the name of O’Gormly, was a man’s name:

BALLYAITHECHILL.—The “town of Echell’s kiln,” or of “Echell’s ford;” for the *aith* in the name might stand for the genetive of *aith*, a kill, or *ath*, a ford. Where names are so inaccurately written, it is not possible to be always sure of their proper signification. In the present case, for instance, the explanation “Rye-town,” or the town of the low ford, might be hazarded. But the first explanation seems the most reasonable.

BALLYVASDUINE.—This is probably an Irish way of writing “Weston’s Town.” Compare “Ballyvastony” in Reeves’s *Down and Connor*, p. 7.

BALLYRENENY—TOLLARD.—These two names, though apparently written separately, are really one, Ballyrenenytollard, “the town of the pinnacle of the high front.”

THE WHITE ABBEY.—This name requires no explanation. (See Reeves’s *Down and Connor*, p. 277.)

BALLYDOWNANNY.—“The town of Aine’s *dun* (or fort).” Aine is a very ancient female name. The hill of Knockenny, in Limerick county, was so called from a fairy woman *Aine*.

BALLYLAGH-ILYNE.—“The town of O’Floinn’s Lake.” The name of O’Floinn (corrupted to O’Lin, by the aspiration of the *f*) was a very general name in Antrim formerly. From it the barony name Lough-insholin—“the lake of O’Floinn’s island”—in Londonderry county (formerly in Tyrone) has been derived.

BALLYCURRAGHFARNY (as in Patent).—“The town of the alder marsh.”

BALLYCULLO.—This is identical with the name *Ballycollo*.

BALLIARDNASOWLE means the “town of the hill (or height) of the eyes,” or “the town of the hill of the barns.”

BALLYHANRY.—“Henry’s Town.”

BALLY-IMULDUFFE.—“O’Maeldubhthaigh’s Town.” O’Maeldubhthaigh was a family name, derived from a person called *Maeldubhthaigh*, or servant of *Dubhtach* (some saint). *Dubhtach* was a very common name anciently. The family name O’Duffy is derived from it.



**BALLYVOSSYNE.**—The town (or place) of Bossyne. This last name (Bossyne) seems to be formed of two words, *Both*, *Sine*, the house, booth, or bothy of *Sine* (pronounced *Shinë* or *Shinay*). For a somewhat similar name, see *Sen-both-sine* (Four Masters, A.D. 601), the “old bothy of *Sinë*,” now Templeshanbo, County Wexford. In many Irish topographical names beginning with *Bo*, this syllable represents the word *both* (pronounced *boh*), which is the origin of the English *booth*, although some would derive it from Dutch *boede*, or German *baude*.

**BENVADAGAN** (Cave-hill).—This must mean “Madagan’s Point” (or Hill). Ben signifies a “summit”—“point,” but in a secondary sense a hill. I have no doubt that Madigan is a modernised form of the old name *Madadhan*, a name borne by several Princes of Ulidia, from one of whom Benvadegan may have been so called.

The following derivations were kindly given by Dr. Joyce :—

**BALLYRECOOLGALGIE.**—Quite unintelligible in its present form. The woody corner, according to Dr. O’Donovan. Galgach’s corner, according to Mr. Hennessy.

**CROMACK.**—Cromach, bending or stooping; probably applied to a river.

**THE FALLS.**—“Both the modern and the old forms of the name obviously point to the original Irish *Tuath-na-bhfál*, the district of the fálIs or hedges.” (Joyce, *Irish Names of Places*, 2nd series, p. 212.)

**MALONE, MYLONE, MYLLON.**—“The plain of the lambs.”

**CASTLEREAGH.**—Grey Castle.

**KERNE SHALGUE.**—Carn-sealga, carn of the hunting—the hunting hill or carn.

**ALT. M’COY.**—M’Coy’s height or glen-side.

**ALT. COMY.**—M’Coy’s height.

**TOLL GLASS, OR POLL GLASS.**—Poll glass—green hole.

**BALLYVASCONY.**—I think Vascony is some English name like Weskon or Weston.

**GALLINAGH.**—Full of *gallans* or standing stones.

**DRUMORE.**—Great ridge.

**CARNMONEY.**—The carn of the bog.

**TOLLARD.**—High *tul* or hill.

**BALLYCARRAGHFARNEY.**—Rough town of the alders.

**BALLICULLO.**—Bally-Mic-Colla, the town of Colla’s son.

**BALLIARDNASOWLE.**—Balliard, high town.

**BALLYHANRY.**—Bally-Henry, Henry’s town.

**BALLY-IMULDUFFE.**—O’Mulduff’s town.

**ARDSOLAS.**—Height of light; or Aghsolas, ford of light.

**COWLE, COILE.**—Cul, a corner, now Carnmoney.

The meaning of the name Belfast is still rather unsettled. Mr. Hennessy, of the Record Office, adheres to the old translation, “the mouth of the ford.” Dr. Joyce (*Irish Names of Places*, p. 331) says, “Belfast, which is called in Irish authorities *Bel-feirsde*, ‘the ford of the Farset.’” Other persons, not so familiar with the derivation of place



names as these two eminent Irish scholars, have alleged that the term "mouth of the ford" is in some sense a misnomer, inasmuch as a ford cannot properly be said to have a mouth, and that the true meaning is the "mouth or entrance of the Fearsaid." Some other meanings have been offered, but devoid of any authority. It can only be said that the derivation of the word Belfast is yet doubtful, but that "the mouth of the ford" is that which is generally accepted, though liable to some objection.

The Ford of Belfast has a kind of connection with the name of the town, and has been, and is still, the subject of dispute. Its actual situation excited much controversy some years ago between Mr. Edmund Getty and Counsellor Lowry, both now deceased. The former contended that the Ford was at the foot of High Street, and in the *Ulster Journal of Archaeology*, vol. iii., pp. 300-315, adduced many arguments in support of that opinion, the strongest of which was, that the Ballast Corporation of Belfast, on account of the damage which ships passing over it suffered, ordered its removal in the year 1786, calling it in their order "the Ford," and mentioning the situation in which it was. This was the genuine ancient ford, according to Mr. Getty, but, in spite of this evidence, Mr. Lowry contended that the passage was much higher up the river, at a place where the water was more shallow, less under the influence of the tide, and with a firmer bottom. That place, he affirmed, was some distance above the late Long Bridge, at the spot known in past times by the name of Watson's Corner, where an artificial ford was really discovered and removed a few years previously. In May, 1877, another place for the Ford has been supposed to be found in a causeway on the County Down side of the river, laid bare by excavations in progress for dock improvements, and which a writer, who affirms that it is the veritable ford, described as regularly formed with stone boulders, oaken piles, and interlacings of timber; but which another contradicts, stating that there was no regularly formed causeway, that the stones and timber were cast together indiscriminately, and that it was merely the foundation of one of the perches so common on the river in past times. A newspaper controversy has arisen on both sides, maintained with equal pertinacity by very intelligent persons. It is not similar to the dispute between Mr. Getty and Mr. Lowry; for now both parties are agreed as to the existence of the principal passage across the river having been somewhere near High Street, the only difference being whether to the north or south of the Farset River, and probably not more than a few hundred feet asunder. The question so rests at the present time, and as no old documents have ever been discovered pointing to

the exact situation of the Ford, it may always remain an unsettled point. At the same time it may be mentioned, that if this recently discovered place could be established as the usual or chief passage across the water, and therefore the Ford, its situation would have been more convenient and fitting in relation to the Castle and the Church than that of any of the others. There was more than one ford—the expression “The Fords” occasionally occurring in old documents. Even so lately as the year 1779 there was one in use so high up as Strandmillis, described as a “Car Roadway,” for drawing lime across the river at low water from kilns established on the County Antrim side. This has no connection whatever with the Ford or Fords of Belfast, which must have been at or near the Castle and the Church. The position of the main Ford is an interesting matter to ascertain, and deserves all the discussion which it has on several occasions received.

## No. XVI.

THE following is an official record of the Belfast Volunteers in their incipient state. As the original names of the body may interest some of the present inhabitants of the town, it is therefore inserted as an additional Appendix.

A ROLL OF THE BELFAST 1ST VOLUNTEER COMPANY, DATE OF THEIR ASSOCIATION THE 17TH OF MARCH, 1778—THE NAMES COPIED AS ORIGINALLY SIGNED BY THE MEMBERS IN THE ASSOCIATION PAPER AND THE BATTALION BOOK.

*(Published by Order of the Company, March 31, 1781.)*

## OFFICERS.

Capt. Banks, Lieut. Cunningham, Lieut. Alexander, Lieut. Tomb, Ensign Bradshaw, Adjutant Mostyn, Chaplain Bryson.

## Regular Attending Members.

LIGHT INFANTRY.	THE 2ND DIVISION.	THE 3RD DIVISION.	GRENADIER DIVISION
L. Tomb (very good attender)	Lieut. Cunningham (good attender)	Lieut. Alexander (bad attender)	Capt. Banks (very good attender)
Alex. Sutherland	Wm. Thompson	Robt. M'Cormick	Val. Joyce
John Neilson	Wm. Spencer	Wm. Duxon	John Miller
Sam. Stewart	Mich. Harrison	Robt. Lynn	David Mattear
James Ferguson	Francis Davis	John Elliot	John Logan
Hugh Crawford	Wm. Milford	Alex. M'Ilwrath	Sam. Ferguson
John Stevenson	Andrew Neilson	Wm. Bryson	Robt. M'Clure
James Joy	Sampson Clarke	Mark Ward	David Dinsmore
Thomas Brown	Jas. Cunningham	Christopher Salmon	Francis Wilson
George Wells	Willoughby Taft	Andrew Hannah	John Stewart
Hugh Warrin	Francis M'Cracken	Robt. Willson	John Ferguson
Wm. Wilson	Jas. Woodburn	Rich. Armstrong	Wm. Dawson
George Joy	Henry Joy, junr.	James Cleland	Jas. Stevenson
Wm. M'Ilwrath	Wm. Auchenleck	Wm. Anderson	Thos. Gaston
John Taggart	Wm. Calwell	Geo. Quin	S. B. Craig
John Boyle	Alex. Ledlie	Sam. Robinson	A. Laman
Jas. Kennedy	Wm. Laird	Michael Hubbard	Jas. Park, junr.
Andrew Hyndman	James Mattear	Wm. M'Kittrick	Maxwell Scott
Wm. Magee		Hugh Sloane	
Joseph Thoburn			
Thos. M'Comb			
Jas. Hyndman			
Duke Berwick			
Will. Blizard			
(privates 23)	(do. 17)	(do. 18)	(do. 17)

## Uncertain Attenders.

Thos. Sinclair	Alex. Arthur,	Allen Searson	John Burden, mostly in Lisburn
Robt. Macartney,	mostly in Dublin	Hugh Dunlap	Hen. Haslet, being mostly abroad
often abroad	Jas. Brown	John Park	John Griffith, always attending
	Jas. Irwin	John Moore	the 3rd Division, and not the
	John Stewart		Grenadiers
	John Baker		Jas. Harpur
			Wm. M'Kittrick
			Hen. Bamber
			T. Kirkpatrick
			Leighton Day
			Victor Coates
(2)	(5)	(4)	Wm. M'Alexander (10)

## Very Bad Attenders.

Roger Mulholland	Thos. Frazer	Jas. Martin
Hugh Lyndon	Rich. Seeds	Geo. M'Clean
(c) Roger M'Clure (3)	(2)	(2)

**Of the Band.**

Shem Thompson, grenadiers	James M'Kain, light infantry
John Tisdall, 2nd division	Wm. White } allotted to no divisions
Francis Joy, 2nd division	Wm. Young }
Will. Ware, 2nd division	

**Non-attenders, though residing in Town.**

G. D.	Wm. Watson	Edw. Harrison	Thos. Clounis
Thomas Hardin	Terence Fitzgibbon	Jas. M'Pherson	David Logan
Alex. Black	(7)	John Hanna (7)	Sam. Mitchell (5)
Wm. Emerson	3rd D.	2nd D.	L. I. D.
Alex. Pettigrew	James Robinson	John Murdoch, has	Wm. Lyons
Wm. Burgess, having	James Graham	put a member in	David Bradshaw
put a person in his	Joseph Wilson	his place	Robt. M'Cleery (3)
place	John Barker	Charles Boswell	

**Members not at present Resident in Town.**

G. D.	—	Betterton	2nd D.	Alex. Holmes	Tho. L. Stewart
Gawin Russel	John Mathews	John Calwell (1)	James Seddon	Wm. Byrnt	
Wm. Wallace	Wm. Caldbeck (6)	L. I. D.	Chas. M'Kinney		
Wm. Crymble	Alex. Anderson	Jas. Fitzgerald	(7)		

**Names of Members not Allotted to Particular Divisions.****NON-ATTENDERS, RESIDENT IN TOWN.**

Robt. Murray	Joseph Murray	Sam. M'Cadam (3)
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**NOT RESIDENT IN TOWN.**

Francis Barron	Rich. Maitland	Baptist Johnston	Geo. Portis	James Murray (5)
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**JOINED OTHER CORPS.**

Stephen Rice, an officer in the Carrickfergus Company	James Corry, joined the Artillery
Robt. Hyndman, an officer in the Belfast 3rd Company	Robt. Hodgson, joined the Belfast 2nd Company
Thos. Lyons, an officer in the same	James Arthur, joined the army
	Charles Lewis, joined the army
	John Gowdy, in the army (8)

**Deceased Members.**

Thos. M'Cadam	James H. Fletcher	John Bullock	Geo. Kelso	Henry Shaw
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**TOTAL.**

	Grenadiers.	3rd Division.	2nd Division.	Light Infantry.
Regular attending members	17	18	17	23
Uncertain attenders	10	4	5	2
Very bad attenders	2	2	3	0
	—	—	—	—
	29	24	25	25—103

Officers 7  
Band 7

**Total number of Effectives**

117

Non-effectives, by absence from town, and never attending,—classed in the divisions	...	...	...	...	...	36 } 44
	...	...	...	...	...	8 }
Joined other Corps	...	...	...	...	...	8
Deaths	...	...	...	...	...	5
						— 57

Total number of Names found in the Association Paper and Battalion Book, from the commencement of the Company till the present time	...	}	174
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A HISTORY  
OF  
THE TOWN OF BELFAST

FROM 1799 TILL 1810

TOGETHER WITH SOME  
INCIDENTAL NOTICES ON LOCAL TOPICS

AND

*Biographies of many well-known Families*

BY  
GEORGE BENN

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VOL. II.

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## P R E F A C E.

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WHEN I commenced this work, I fully intended to carry it on from the year 1800 to 1870, with circumstantial accounts of all the great events which had occurred in that long interval, so that it should be in every respect a suitable companion volume to my first, published in 1877. Before I had proceeded very far, my sight entirely failed, rendering it impossible for me to make the necessary researches, or complete so large a project. I had no choice, therefore, but to publish what I had already collected, which has accordingly been done in the present unpretending volume. It is divided into three parts:—*First*, A short summary of Belfast history from 1799 till the year 1810; *Second*, Notices of some important events which occurred in the town both before and after the year 1810, and which could not be included in the first part; and *Third*, An attempt—the first that has ever been made on a considerable scale—to put together a number of biographies or family histories of noted persons connected with the town, who lived at the end of the last or the beginning of the present century. This will probably be the most attractive part of the work, if any part of it should prove attractive.

Under the circumstances, I have to bespeak the favourable consideration of my readers for any shortcomings or defects which they may find in this little volume—such as repetitions,

or errors in dates and names. As much care as possible has been taken to avoid all such things; and I have been obliged to have the proof-sheets corrected by a kind friend, who could scarcely be expected to be familiar with all the dates and circumstances herein detailed. The little volume may, however, interest some, and be of use to a future inquirer who will undertake the work on the large scale originally contemplated by myself.

GEORGE BENN.

BELFAST, *April, 1880.*

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# HISTORY OF BELFAST.

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A SHORT SUMMARY FROM 1799 TILL END OF 1810.

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## CHAPTER I.

**A**S the Marquis of Donegall has not for many years resided in Belfast, and as the history, ancient or modern, of the noble house of Chichester is all but unknown to most of the inhabitants of the town, we think the following few words, containing a Record of the Devolution to the Title and Estates of the Family from 1706 till the present time, will form a suitable introduction to this volume.

1706, April 10th. Arthur, Third Earl of Donegall, died on this date, leaving Arthur, Fourth Earl, his eldest son and heir-at-law, who then entered into possession of the Family Estates.

1757. Arthur the Fourth Earl died in this year without male issue, whereupon his nephew, Arthur the Fifth Earl (son of John Chichester, a younger brother of the Fourth Earl), succeeded to the Title and Estates.

1761, November. Arthur the Fifth Earl of Donegall (grandfather of the present Marquis) married Lady Anne Hamilton, daughter of the Duke of Hamilton. He was afterwards

- created Baron Fisherwick, Earl of Belfast, and subsequently, in 1791, Marquis of Donegall, and he died 1799, January 5th, and was succeeded by his eldest son, George Augustus, who thereupon became Marquis of Donegall, and entered into possession of the Estates.
- 1844, October 5th. George Augustus (the Second Marquis) died, leaving George Hamilton, the present and Third Marquis of Donegall, who has since been and still is in possession of the Estates.

The First Marquis of Donegall died on the fifth of January, 1799, in the sixtieth year of his age. He had been married three times—*First*, to Anne, daughter of the Duke of Hamilton, who was mother of the only two children that survived him, namely, his heir, the Second Marquis, and Lord Spencer Chichester, whose son was afterwards raised to the peerage by the title of Lord Templemore; *secondly*, to Mrs. Moore, a member of the Spencer family of Trummery in the County Down, and who had first married Thomas Moore, Esq., of the County Tipperary; and *thirdly*, to Miss Godfrey, daughter of the Rev. Doctor Godfrey, which lady survived the Marquis thirty years, having died in the year 1829.

A writer in a very recent publication, in search of the sensational or imaginative, after relating correctly his marriage as above, and stating that he left his heir an income of £50,000 per annum, which is also most probably quite true, has this additional sentence, which, with respect to the outward demonstrations mentioned, is very far from being true:—

“Immediately after the 5th of January, 1799, the houses in Duke’s Place, and other favourite dwelling-places of the children of Israel, were brilliantly illuminated. Rum and cakes were distributed in abundance; and the children of the circumcised rejoiced exceedingly, not because the deceased peer had acquired an evil reputation as a persecutor of the people, for indeed he had never been known to have had any dealings with the tribe, but because of his death many of the Jews came into large possessions.” The meaning conveyed by

this will be easily comprehended by the people of Belfast. The first Marquis had indeed no dealings with Jews. On the contrary, Dr. Haliday, though a political opponent, mentions that he possessed an immense collection of articles of *virtu* of great rarity and value, and a splendid library, some of which, or both of which, are still probably family possessions. From the indefinite way in which the Doctor in this case expresses himself, it might almost be supposed these valuable articles were in Belfast. Such is hardly possible, as there was no place here to contain them, and there is even difficulty in discovering where the Marquis himself resided during his occasional visits to Belfast, for he was an absentee. The only place suitable, and even it would have been greatly wanting in the requirements necessary for one of his great wealth and high position, was Donegall House, which was in existence during many of his latter years.

The Earl must have made many visits to the town, but it is impossible now to discover where he remained, or how he employed himself. One of these visits was in 1765, accompanied by the Countess; he was then twenty-five years of age, the Countess younger, both in the flush of youth. They were invited by Mr. Thomas Greg, father of the late Cunningham Greg, and probably the greatest merchant in the town, to visit his ship, then lying in the Lough. They accepted the invitation. Mr. Greg entertained them and the principal inhabitants in a noble manner, and to show his respect changed the name of the ship, formerly called the "Prosperity," to that of the "Countess of Donegall."

The townland of Ballynafeigh is in the County of Down, but closely adjoins Belfast. In the grant of Charles the Second, it was confirmed to the Chichester family, together with all their other estates in the County of Antrim. Ormeau (the young elm) forms part of Ballynafeigh. The demesne contains 174 acres, and is now rented to the Corporation of Belfast for a public park at an annual rent of £1,752. The Park is now in process of formation, and will be a very handsome one when

completed. At what period Ormeau House, now entirely removed, was first built, or whether it was occupied by the first Marquis, it has been impossible to discover, but it was probably built at intervals. On the 5th of May, 1799, there was an auction at Ormeau of furniture, beds, &c., but no intimation is given of the ownership of these goods, nor is there any name to the advertisement.

Donegall House also, with stores and office-houses behind it, was advertised to be let in 1799. A fine of £500 was expected. From this and the Ormeau auction, it would almost appear as if the second Marquis purposed to be an absentee as well as his father. The second Marquis lived for a time at Annadale, and also occupied the house of Mr. William Sinclaire in Donegall Place in 1798.

About three weeks after the death of the first Marquis, the second was entertained at a splendid banquet in the Exchange Rooms. He was then in his thirtieth year, married to Miss May, and was the father of a son, the present Marquis. At this banquet it was truly stated that the young Marquis had come into possession of the most princely estate in the kingdom. "Happy augury of the future prosperity of Belfast." Bright prospects indeed had dawned. At this time the entire town, with a few trifling exceptions, was held on determinable leases. It was therefore literally true; and long after, the usual statements in the town were that no subject in the kingdom possessed so great a property, all subject, or shortly to be subject, to his own power, as the Marquis of Donegall. John Brown was sovereign, and presided at this great banquet.

It was soon discovered that the second Marquis did not possess the abilities of his father; that while kind, benevolent, and always generous to the town, he was destitute of that firmness of character, and that commanding talent, necessary to deal with so great and rising a place as Belfast, or to understand how to take equitable advantage of his position in after years, which himself and his family would have been fully justified in demanding.

The second Marquis died at Ormeau in 1844. He will be remembered by many inhabitants of the town, walking in the streets, or riding through them on a little pony, in the most unostentatious manner. His name will appear frequently in the following pages, and always in a light favourable to his generosity and kindliness of disposition.

We now purpose, in continuation of our first volume, to write a brief history of Belfast for a few of the first years of the present century, adding thereto some articles of a more important character, which cannot so well be treated of in an unconnected or a desultory form, and ending with some biographical notices of the worthies or men of mark who contributed to the well-being, extension, or reputation of the town, or who were otherwise in any way distinguished.

It may be thought that with the troubles of 1798 the Rebellion ceased. It was scarcely so; vigilance was still needed, and military rule still prevailed, and continued more or less during these two years. The Court-Martial continued still to be held in Belfast, and prisoners with pikes were occasionally brought in for trial. General Nugent caused the names of all the inmates of every house living therein to be affixed in a conspicuous place on the houses, and if any be absent from sunset to sunrise, the owner shall be accountable, and be liable to such punishment as a Court-Martial shall inflict. The magistrates at the same time declared the whole County of Antrim to be in a state of disturbance. Our town participated in these stringent regulations. As an example of insubordination, Richmond Lodge, only two miles from Belfast, the seat of Charles Rankin, Esq., was attacked for arms by five men, whose faces were covered with green veils. Notwithstanding this and many similar outrages which took place, the people were still unwilling that the civil law should be superseded, and the military introduced in its stead. The comment on this state of the country in the document from which we quote is expressive of discontent and suppressed insubordinate feelings. The writer says—"Ten years have hardly elapsed since this



part of Ireland was justly considered a model to the rest of the kingdom, for its religious and moral principles. How that character, at least in some districts, has changed, should call for the serious consideration of every one. We are led to this melancholy remark by a trial just over at Downpatrick of sixteen men, charged with a deed of as atrocious and deep a dye as ever stained the page of a book or newspaper. Twelve men were found guilty, three of whom were executed." This was the famous Saintfield case, in which twelve persons, confined to a house from which escape was rendered impossible, were burnt to death in 1798. To be sure, this frightful outrage did not occur in or very near Belfast. It was a few miles distant. We had to deal here with minor offences. Prisoners were sent from the town to Fort George; and the Court-Martial in the Donegall Arms tried many for having concealed arms, and military supervision still continued. The Yeomanry Cavalry and the Yeomanry Infantry assisted in preserving the peace, and suppressing any material outward display within the town limits. But subjects more akin to the feelings and conditions of Belfast were at hand, rendering them very probably indifferent to the political state of the town, and the military supervision to which they were liable.

Many persons have heard their fathers speak of the two bad seasons immediately following the Rebellion. They were the two most calamitous years Belfast ever endured. Cold was complained of in April, 1799, and in that month a heavy snow-storm happened, a most unusual occurrence. Incessant rain followed; August and September had no autumnal weather. The newspaper records state that the floods in the Lagan exceeded anything that had ever before been known. The usual consequences resulted. The corn crops were utterly destroyed. At this period the people had to depend for their food entirely on home-grown produce; and in October, the inhabitants of Belfast foresaw a dear and scarce winter, and famine at their very doors. The first notice that has been observed is the following, almost applicable in its terms and

objects to the Belfast of 1878. "We are happy to state that the means for alleviating the distress of the poor by means of a Public Kitchen has at last been attended to. Subscriptions have been going on for some time, and we will shortly communicate something interesting." This was the first Belfast movement to meet the expected scarcity.

A proclamation was issued at the same time, forbidding the making of anything but brown bread; the soldiers at the same time were deprived of their hair-powder, to save the flour, it may be presumed, which entered into the composition of that article, of which there was a manufactory in Belfast. A free entry was permitted into the ports, of Indian corn and meal of all kinds, and any exportation of the same was totally forbidden. The calamity of course had not yet fallen in its full force upon the town, and it yet admitted a facetious turn, as will appear from the following. It is a long communication, styled "Petition of Beggars from the Purlieus of Belfast—Rags in the Chair," and after many words on "charity which never faileth," concludes thus:—"We wish that the rich and luxurious would consider our situation, and, in order to relieve our wants, that they would live on more moderate meals, and draw fewer *corks*. In such hard times, public entertainments should be converted to public charities. In the distribution of these charities, we do not comprehend the wandering strollers of the streets, but the poor inhabitants, the aged, the poor tradesman, the diseased, and the unfortunate. Every thing at present for the immediate support and comfort of life is far beyond the reach of the poor to procure. Meal, potatoes, and firing, at such enormous prices, are far too dear to be procured by us. Between hunger and cold, how are we to exist? No man will starve that can steal—and they that are able, and have courage, will commit robbery—self-preservation is the first law of nature. We, therefore, recommend the practice of charity both from duty and policy, but Charity is a duty peculiarly incumbent on the rich, because Providence has enabled them, in their superabundance, to spare a little for the paupers' necessities, which are those of nature. We call upon

your mercy in the name of our brethren of the *Poke*, which we here represent, and we shall endeavour to behave worthy of your humanity, and shall ever pray, &c.

“ J. RAGS, *President*.

“ BILLY TATTERS, *Treasurer*.”

These home arguments of Mr. Tatters and his brethren of the “*Poke*” were not required to excite the people of Belfast to display their benevolence. The Soup Kitchen was established in Smithfield, in which place, and in the streets and lanes immediately adjoining, the poorer classes of the town then chiefly dwelt. It was on the 5th of November, 1799, the Soup Establishment was announced as being put up. The distress increasing as the winter advanced, tickets were given to the helpless—and, indeed, it was full time to meet the calamity, the price of oatmeal, then the general food of the people, having risen at the end of the year nearly to four times its price in the winter of 1878 and '79. History here again repeats itself. The Bishop of Down, then resident in Belfast, took great interest in the Soup Kitchen, occupying the chair occasionally at the meetings. The record of proceedings at this era is worth preserving as a contrast to the action of 1879 with an entirely similar object. One thousand and ninety-two people were served in four days, each with a quart of soup, a piece of meat, and a pennyworth of bread. At a meeting of the committee in December, the Reverend William Bristow in the chair, it was said “the expenses of 2600 quarts of soup, including attendance, wages, and fuel, and the distribution of it in seven days ending on Sunday last, amounted to £10 17s. 10½d., bread same time £8 2s. 4d., weekly expenses to £19 0s. 2½d., by which upwards of 300 persons have been daily supplied with soup and bread. It was resolved that nine tickets should be sold for one shilling and a penny, each of which would entitle the bearer to one quart of soup and one pennyworth of bread. Should this plan be encouraged by the inhabitants, a greater number will be issued by the committee, and as all the *Badged* Begging Poor have received tickets already, it is hoped the purchasers of

these tickets will confine their distribution of them to poor housekeepers."

This was a very good subscription for 1799, when the town certainly did not contain one-tenth of the present population. But the expedients and suggestions to meet what was commonly called the "objects," or, in other words, the distressed people of the town, were inexpressible. Rice, Indian meal, bran, &c., had their several advocates and suggestions for using all in conjunction.

The Indian meal, which was then a new article of food in the country, was objected to by some of the poor, as being so hard and gritty that no white man could possibly use it, however suitable it might be for a black; but they soon learned to change their tone. Their own soluble and palatable oaten meal was, in the beginning of the year 1800, 41s. 10d. per cwt.

But notable schemes besides those bearing on the actual cost or supply of provisions were adopted to mitigate the distress, and were recommended; one of which, if not very efficacious in adding to the Relief Fund, is at least curious as an exemplification of the customs and usages of the day, and must lead to the belief that card-playing was an institution in the town not to be extinguished even by famine. "To the Ladies and Gentlemen of Belfast. In this season of unparalleled distress among the poor, allow me to suggest that every Table should double the sum that is now usually left for Cards, the extra part to be left with the lady of the house towards a fund for benevolent uses. The feelings of that amiable Matron were to be envied who, at the end of the month, would be able to hand over a sum to the Soup Kitchen, a sum that might preserve a thousand claimants from famine." The writer further goes on to say—"At Promenades, Coteries, and Dances, let an additional shilling be paid by each person, and let the frequenters of the Boxes in the Theatre give an additional sixpence or shilling above the price of a Ticket, all this in advocacy of the plan of uniting charity with amusement. On the festive meetings of the gentlemen at their clubs, they would do well to give an additional shilling each above the

expense of the entertainment for the benefit of the poor." Hear that plan of raising money, that inexhaustible and simple plan, ye worthy people of Belfast in 1879! But it really is an evidence that the pleasures of the town still went on, notwithstanding "the dearth that was in the land."

We may close this chapter for the present, which has been concerned so much with the subject which then forced itself on the attention of the inhabitants, with the following summary on Soup Kitchen History. It is so far a sad tale, but possesses many features creditable to the people of the town in those times.

"10th of October, 1800. On this day the Public Kitchen was closed for the present. On Sunday last, relief was given to 897 poor persons. Since the commencement of the Charity in December, 1799, up to the present, the sum of £1,547 15s. 10d. has been expended."

This cessation of the relief, if intended to be permanent, was rather premature. The year 1800 was so dry that the corn was generally pulled, and the potatoes so small and shrunken as to be nearly worthless as an article of food. We have often heard those who lived through those two miserable years speak of them as the wet year and the dry year. We shall find, therefore, that the famine continued with more or less intensity throughout 1800 and much of 1801, as no supply of the past year existed at the beginning of the next, as is always the case in the matter of old stock in the present more fortunate days.

## CHAPTER II.

1799-1800.

ON the 7th of October, 1799, the Marquis Cornwallis, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, arrived in Belfast, and took up his abode for the period of his stay in Donegall House. He was immediately waited on by the Sovereign and Burgesses, who presented him with an Address, conferred on him the freedom of the Corporation, and invited him to a banquet. The Lord Lieutenant remained several days in Belfast, and was present at a great Coterie in the Exchange Rooms, where all the beauty and fashion of Belfast were assembled to greet him, which he very much enjoyed. He inspected the troops here and in Carrickfergus; and finally left the town, escorted to Antrim by the Belfast Yeomanry Cavalry. His object in coming here was to further by his presence the Union, which was the great question of the day. An Address in favour of that measure was presented to him by the County of Antrim, the signatures to which occupy no less than four columns of the newspaper. These must have been palmy times for the newspapers, though we had as yet but one in the town. Very few Belfast names appear in this great Address; but, in spite of all opposition, the Union cause finally triumphed. Mr. Dobbs, known in our day as "Millennium Dobbs," was one of those who strongly opposed it, basing his arguments on Holy Writ. He laid down three main propositions—*first*, the speedy advent of the Messiah; *second*, the signs of His coming, and the manner of it; and *third*, that Ireland is to have the glorious pre-eminence of being the first kingdom that will receive him. These cogent arguments fell on deaf ears.

But Mr. Hamilton, the principal member for Belfast, a lawyer



of reputation, and of such rising eminence as to promise the highest rank in his profession, was also an opponent of the Union, and, not moved thereto, it is certain, by the idle dreams of his friend Millennium Dobbs, but because his Patron differed from him on the momentous question of the Union, resigned his seat, and Mr. May and Mr. Congreve were chosen by the Marquis for the few months which the Irish Parliament was expected to continue, and were the last two members who sat for this town in that Assembly. The Union Bill passed the Irish House on June 17th, 1800, and now only waited the Royal Assent to become the law of the land, the ravings of a religious enthusiast, vehement protests, and eloquent orations being equally unheeded by Lord Castlereagh and his associates.

But the story of our own social condition, trifling as it may now seem, is more interesting than the greater matters of the nation. The town and the country around were in a state of great unquietness. Rumours were afloat that a great force of 40,000 Frenchmen was about to land so near as in the County of Down. A chief of the rebels of 1798, calling himself "General," was executed at a town not far from Belfast, and many executions followed at other localities not many miles from this town for offences committed long before. Happily, Belfast was exempted from any more sights of the kind.

So unsettled was the state of the country, that people had to get *passes* when going by Donaghadee to Scotland or England. These at first cost only three pence, but a man calling himself a "Trogger" complains that the charge was now two shillings and sixpence, and as his business required very frequent visits to Scotland, the expense of the *passes* was rather serious. The mails were resumed in April, 1799, between Belfast and Dublin, the travelling between the two places having been interrupted or partially discontinued during the Rebellion. Advertisements are frequent, offering rewards for the apprehension of burglars who broke into houses in Belfast and Whitehouse, and everything indicated disorder, fear, and misgovernment.

The following are a few examples of the advertisements of the

day :—" A house is to be let on the west side of Arthur Street, with a beautiful prospect of the country. Another in Mill Street, lately occupied by Thomas Sinclaire, with a splendid walled-in garden. Mr. Thomas Batt offers for sale, at his stores, No. 8, North Street, Dublin porter, whisky, and Dumbarton glass. Thomas Whinnery, the Post Master, offers for sale at the Post Office, in Donegall Street, 64 puncheons of whisky," a very considerable lot indeed for the Post Master. "To be let, a manufactory of gingham and calicoes, situated in High Street." There was an inn called the "White Cross" in Ann Street, behind which a great slaughter house is advertised to be let, capable of hanging 100 head of cattle.

"To be sold, 22 acres, 2 roods, and 31 perches in the Plains, close to the town of Belfast, subject to a rent of £40 a-year." The Plains at this day, it is needless to add, are nearly all covered with houses. The agricultural rent here stated paid to the Marquis was very moderate. In another advertisement it is said the Plains were free of tithe, such arising from their having been in ages past church lands attached to the religious houses once standing at Friar's Bush. "The lease of a genteel dwelling-house in the Grand Parade, adjoining that at present occupied by General Drummond; also the lease of the old Theatre, in the rear of said house, extending to Rosemary Lane, containing sufficient ground on which a small square might be built." This is a curious piece of town topography. This was the theatre, the entrance to which was in Rosemary Street, but the projected small square was not proceeded with. There were but few, if any, speculative builders then alive to embrace advantageous chances.

Thomas Ludford Stewart was Seneschal in 1799. His office and residence, either wholly or partially, was in the Old Castle Grounds, at the Castle Office, which is still to be seen, though not now Lord Donegall's office. Mr. Stewart calls it Linen Hall Street, which was the first name given to Donegall Place. His houses are often noticed as being occupied on the quays and other now entirely inappropriate localities by clergymen and

others as private dwellings. Such are now universally the offices of merchants or of extensive shopkeepers. It would be more correct to say the sites of such, for new and greater edifices have now utterly banished the old landmarks, even houses not fifty years built have been removed to be replaced by more imposing edifices. There are extremely few old houses in Belfast; all have gone with the wigs, cocked hats, and the queues. Even at that time, small and rude as the town then was, its antiquated appearance must have been diminishing in 1799, as the writer of a letter of that date thus speaks of its general appearance after a considerable absence, and remarks "how forcibly he is struck with the appearance it exhibited contrasted with that which it formerly presented, when so many hanging signs, pent-houses, street obstructions were allowed to remain; and in particular the numbering of the houses and labelling of the streets and lanes, giving a neatness and city-like appearance which was both useful and ornamental." Doubts may be very reasonably expressed as to the city-like appearance of Belfast at this date, notwithstanding the removal of the obstacles referred to, and the substitution of more modern arrangements.

Two masons struck work, or, as the expression then was, conspired to raise the wages. They were committed to gaol by a magistrate, and got three months' imprisonment for the offence. This was very summary work compared with the course of proceedings in these times; and the subject is frequently taken up afterwards, and remarks made that the improvements of the town cannot go on if such illegal proceedings be permitted. The wages of carpenters in 1799 are noted at 15s. per week, which was very good, considering the times. A duel between two officers took place on the 26th August, 1799, at the back of the Poor House. No spot more secluded, or more certain to be free from interruption, could have been selected than the back of the Poor House in 1799. The Antrim Road did not then exist, nor for many a year after; a narrow path called Buttle's Lane ran up beside the Poor

House. The lane derived its name, it may be fairly presumed, from David Buttle, the deposed sovereign of 1703.

That difficult matter the Pottery again appears in 1800. James and William Tennent, manufacturers of Staffordshire earthenware, advertise "Gentlemen's table services complete, of different patterns and best quality." But this was no real revival of the more choice pottery works of 1698.

The neglected condition of the two quays was often a subject of complaint. We had just two quays and no more. One ran up to the bottom of High Street, terminating about where the present clock tower now is; the other came to the end of Waring Street, and was called Lime Kiln Dock. It is true all the sides of these two docks were dignified with the titles of quays, as will be seen on the map of 1791. Many accidents occurring, the following scheme was advocated for preventing such, and making a great improvement:—"The suggestion was to have pillars of stone from the floodgates to the Lime Kilns on the one side, and from the gates to the Long Bridge on the other, with staples on the top to admit a chain to be led through, so as to form a complete safeguard all round the quays." It is not easy to comprehend all this at the present day, and no account remains to tell whether or not this safeguard was ever made. The end of the small dock entering in High Street was secured by a semi-circular wall with an iron railing at the top, which had probably been placed there about this date, when the river was finally closed over. It was the Town Dock, or exit of the town river into the Lagan.

The summer of this year was called the "dear summer," and is still known by that name, than which none could be more appropriate. The prices of the common necessities of life in June 27th, 1800, in Belfast market, were the following:—

Oaten meal,	39s. to 41s. 6d.	per cwt.
Irish wheat,	33s.	do.
American wheat,	30s.	do.
Oats,	20s. to 22s. 9d.	do.
Fine flour,	45s.	do.

Previously to this date the distress and scarcity in the country had reached its climax. The use of flour was prohibited in the royal household, distillation ceased, and all seemed now fully aware of the gravity of the situation. In Belfast the Soup Kitchen was revived; a store at the Lime Kiln Dock was opened to give out meal to the people on these terms—"A quantity not exceeding one stone, at 4s. 10½d. per stone, 2s. 5d. per a half stone, and 1s. 3d. for a quarter of a stone." It was in this year the Flour and Bread Company was formed, afterwards called the Public Bakery, under which title, as a sort of Joint Stock Company, it is still in being. Then flour mills were projected in the town, one of which was actually built, but in what place is not stated. A very curious correspondence took place between the authorities here and those in Birmingham, as to the best means of meeting the emergency. Various suggestions were made as to the economy of the food itself, and the method of preparing and grinding it. No steam engines were made in Belfast, and one proposal was to get up windmills. What we would now call a Joint Stock Company was formed in this town to establish a number of mills. That certainly could not cheapen the actual food, which was the chief matter required.

But the Soup Kitchen was found the most convenient and ready for the purpose of relief, and the efforts and subscriptions of the inhabitants of the town for the mitigation of the sufferings of the poorer classes were liberal and unceasing. The difficulties were recommended to be met by very peculiar measures, proving that the townspeople were very nearly at their wits' end to know what to resort to. "It was recommended that gentlemen and ladies religiously dedicate their winnings at cards to the benefit of the poor; to abstain from all second courses, the price thereof to be given to the poor; that invitations to dinner and evening parties be less frequent than usual, and that all saddle and carriage horses be put upon half their allowance of oats." The effect of these notable measures in relieving the distress might well be doubted. The weekly expenses of the Kitchen



had reached in June to £50; 888 shares of bread and soup were daily distributed, and the personal applications for food in August even exceeded the number just mentioned. But the strain of £50 per week could not have been borne long by the small population then in Belfast. If the advice tendered by this public censor on the habits of the townspeople be true, it would appear that, though with a rebellion hardly yet quelled, and in the midst of a destitution and misery the most extreme, many still lived as they had done in past years. Their enjoyments were not very intellectual; but to make amends, and to complete the history of their sociology in 1800, some ingenious person invented an amusing, or it may have been an instructive entertainment, called a Ramble through Belfast. It was spoken to a collected audience in the Theatre, and the Rambler relates his visits to all the places worthy of his notice, of which this is the skeleton or outline.

"Theatre, 22 April, 1800.

"In the course of the evening the following entertainment:—  
A Ramble through Belfast.

"1st. Description of the Academy and Church.

"2nd. The Poor House, Blessings arising from Charity.

"3rd. The Exchange on a Day of Business.

"4th. The Room on a Coterie Night, Music, Taste, &c.

"5th. The Quay, Shipping, Commerce, and Benefit arising therefrom.

"6th. The Linen Hall and Manufacture, the staple wealth of the country.

"7th. Ireland and Comforts of Industry.

"8th. A Peep into the Play House, actors, critics, &c.

"9th. A Tavern Scene and Night Adventures of a Buck.

"To conclude with a Eulogy on the Town, Trade, and Commerce of Belfast."

The Ramble through Belfast was said to have been sung by Mr. Kelly with great applause. These were all the public institutions of 1800, and no ingenuity could extract another to form a subject for Mr. Kelly's illustrations.



Such were all our institutions, all our public buildings, to be taken account of by a person going in search of them, in the very last month of the eighteenth century, and it must have taxed the ingenuity of the Rambler to make the description of some of them at least in any manner attractive.

It was in this year also the Dispensary and Fever Hospital of the town were established. The Committee appointed report that they have taken for the purpose three houses in Smithfield. Two of the chief persons in the Dispensary were the Rev. William Bristow and Doctor James M'Donnell. They state that from the 1st December, 1799, till 1st August, 1800, 105 patients were admitted into these three houses fitted up as an Hospital. £220 were expended in the nine months.

Much praise was given to the chief actors in these charitable works, and the great benefit that had accrued from their zealous labours is fully described. In October the subscriptions had increased to £382, but this was much short of the expenditure, so that Doctor Drummond was asked to preach a charity sermon. It is unnecessary to follow further the financial relations of the Dispensary and Fever Hospital in 1800. The old Poor House issues its address also; it states that the funds were never so low, arising from the excessive price of all kinds of provisions, and the increasing claims upon its diminished resources. To a larger portion of the inhabitants the century certainly closed in gloom and poverty, though the most strenuous exertions were made by the respectable residents, particularly by the few medical men then in the town, to alleviate the effects of the famine.

## CHAPTER III.

1801-1803.

JANUARY 1st.—On this day the Union Flag was displayed on the dilapidated old Market House, and the whole three kindred nations were thenceforth united under one Imperial Parliament.

Our general history continued not less obscure and uneventful than in the two previous years. Small details, and such as may seem to many too trifling for notice, alone compose it. Our observations must of necessity be short and desultory. The famine had, unfortunately, not yet left us. So far from a duty being now levied on imported foreign food, a bounty was paid to the importer in 1801; the shilling loaf was now precisely the same weight as the sixpenny one had been the same day twenty years before; potatoes were about nine shillings per cwt.; and strong representations were everywhere issued to cut out the eyes of that valuable esculent for seed, reserving its substance for food, and Mr. Lindsay, the nurseryman of Belfast, advertises scoops thoroughly adapted for that purpose for sixpence each, with a quart of beans into the bargain. The Lord Lieutenant issued a "Proclamation, exhorting all masters of families who are not altogether in the lower ranks of life not to suffer any potatoes whatever to be consumed in their families, in order to save all for seed. It is also recommended that all use of flour in pastry be discontinued, and that the consumption of bread be attended with the strictest frugality." Hard times these were, worse than the time of appeal to the wise and prudent in 1847, and of themselves a sufficient notice of this dismal scarcity. The incessant instructions of a similar kind in Belfast continued more or less till the appearance of the crops in July,

1801, gave sanguine expectations that the famine would soon end. We will therefore have no occasion to recur again to these dreary events, but this famine, considering the length of time it continued, was the greatest this town ever had to endure before or since.

“The military observances kept up in the town for several years after the Rebellion are easily discoverable. The enthusiasm was now quite different from what it had been a few years before. The yeomanry were now paramount, both of horse and foot. They paraded on Sundays, and we well recollect the fifes of the body playing down the street on these mornings as if they were recruiting sergeants on a market day.”

The above remarks are from the MSS. of the late Mr. Henry Greer, and are unquestionably correct. Mr. Greer was a native of the town, was a bookseller in it, and lived to an advanced age. He had been taking notes all his life, and no man was more liberal in imparting his knowledge. There are, in his collection, notices of every newspaper or periodical, however insignificant, published in the town in his day, and every work issued in it, whether from natives or strangers. His notes are most surprisingly copious. Not a work, be it ever so small, has escaped him during his long life, and the collection, in this respect and as a whole, does infinite credit to Mr. Greer's industry and ability.

We also remember, as well as Mr. Greer, the Sunday displays of the yeomanry and other military characters, of which this notice is ample proof.

“1802.—The members of the Belfast Cavalry are desired to meet on Sunday next, at twelve o'clock, at the White Linen Hall, mounted and fully accoutred. Fine for non-attendance, one guinea.”

There were, it is superfluous to say, no day constables in the town in 1801. A necessity for such would appear to have existed, if the following be correct:—

“It has been the practice of late for shop boys and *great* boys to make use of small looking-glasses to reflect the rays of the

sun at passengers as they go up and down High Street, particularly between Bridge Street and the Market House. . . . A constable or two appointed to perambulate High Street the first sunshiny day will probably have the opportunity of beholding these optical practitioners at work."

Nice work for the shopboys and shopmen of High Street on sunshiny days! But then they were all poor little dingy shops, one of the huge establishments, probably, doing more business now than all in the street between the points here named. Notices of this nature indicate not only the propensities of the counter hands, but also the unfrequented state of the street, which is at this day the most crowded part of the town in the sunny days of summer.

John Tisdall, who appears to have been at this time the chief auctioneer in the town, advertises the sale of houses in Blue Bell Entry, one of our extinct thoroughfares. This lane, otherwise called Custom House Lane, ran from Waring Street to High Street, and was a famous resort in its time.

How changed are the localities which this announcement shows—"John Macartney and George Bamber propose a lease of the extensive bleach green and farm in Shankhill, one mile from the town." Macartney's household property was also sold, and this is the last notice that appears of a Macartney in a good station. His residence was in Linen Hall Street in 1801.

We have got great baths now at the top of North Street, but in 1801 there were also baths in town. An advertisement, headed "Sea Bathing," thus proceeds—"Baths at Lilliput Nursery Grounds. Hot, cold, tepid, and shower. The proprietor has made a reservoir to supply the baths during the time the tide is out, from which there is a constant supply of water going into the baths, and a continual current going out of them, to keep up a fresh supply until the tide returns, by which means bathers may be accommodated at any hour." Lilliput, which name is not even yet unknown, was so called by David Manson, the famous schoolmaster of Belfast, and it was to this place he led his pupils for exercise and enjoyment. The sea

was much nearer to Lilliput than it is now, all below it at this day to the water's edge being streets, factories, and houses. The tide must have flowed nearly to Lilliput in 1801, to admit of a convenient way of supplying these baths.

The News Room of the town was first in a lower room of the Exchange, with the windows on the ground floor, fronting Donegall Street. This News Room was as old as the year 1782, and, so far as can be learned, was the first in Belfast.

Mr. Incedon, known to a former generation as the greatest singer of his day, was in Belfast in July, 1801, for nine nights. He made an offer to perform in behalf of the Poor House, which was accepted, and the exhibition was rather singular—at least it would appear so to the present generation. It was in the church on Sunday, and is thus described—"At 3 o'clock, when the Church Service had ended, a selection of Sacred Music from the different Oratorios of Handel will be performed in St. Anne's Church." The advertisement proceeds as explicitly as a play-bill. The players on the violoncello and the organ are named. "Admittance, 3 British shillings. As the inhabitants of Belfast and the neighbourhood may seldom have an opportunity of hearing such an eloquent Musical Entertainment, it is expected they will avail themselves of the present occasion; at the same time that they will contribute to the support of a most useful institution for the support of the Poor." £81 11s. 4d. were raised, it is said in the document from which we copy, by this entertainment. This all seems odd at least, but topographical notices, such as can be substantiated by documents and the memory of old persons, will be thought more worthy of attention. The following is one of this kind:—"Donegall Street to be paved from the Poor House Gate to the Academy Walls, for making on both sides of said Street footways 300 yards long on each side, with posts to prevent obstructions from horses and carriages." The upper part of Donegall Street, from John Street, except the two old houses at the corner of that street, was chiefly fields and unenclosed ground within memory, with trees growing and agricultural crops, on the John Street

side at least, and probably on the other side also, in 1801. Whether these works were adequately performed at this time may be doubted.

The famine, it was expected, would not be without useful results, as the observation, when brighter prospects were opening on the town, was that "the sobriety which the high price of food for so long a period necessarily produced will be continued now from other motives."

The Old Rampart beyond the Academy in Donegall Street remained open in 1801, and was stated to be then a great nuisance, being a receptacle for all the filth of the neighbourhood. When water is supplied now into the houses of almost the very poorest inhabitants of Belfast, the following notice is remarkable:—"The poor are distressed for want of a sufficient number of water cocks at the fountain off Linen Hall Street. We often see a crowd of females at it quite in despair of its coming to their turn to be supplied, and after waiting an hour at it, either go away without being supplied, or walk some distance out of the town to obtain elsewhere that indispensable article."

Does the following refer to one of the old bridges across the High Street River still remaining in 1801?—

"Notice to Contractor for Proposals to lower the *Arch* over the River in High Street, opposite Church Lane, for 70 feet."

This may refer to the final closing of the river in High Street, the taking away of the old arch or bridge, and replacing it by another of better form. Some old persons have told us, certainly many years since, that they remembered the river still open, and flowing a clear stream from Bridge Street to the Dock. About the same time the drowning of a man is reported as having taken place in the dock opposite Prince's Street, so that the protecting chains were either ineffectual or not put up at all. The space opposite Prince's Street, where the dock was, is now solid, well paved ground.

"To be let, a House, No. 34, Castle Street, with a most elegant garden adjoining the premises, with an abundant supply of



vegetables, and well stocked with fruit and wall trees." Castle Street is now differently occupied.

"The Olympic Theatre was established in William M'Cance's garden in South Parade in September, 1801." This was horsemanship. Places were to be taken at the box office, price 3s. 3d., the very same which was demanded to hear Mr. Incledon sing in the Church.

The great terror of French invasion continued for a long time, and showed itself in 1801. In October, the magistrates of the county were convened to consider about adopting means for removing from the coast into the interior, in the event of an invasion, all live stock and provisions, as directed by the Lord Lieutenant.

The short peace of 1801 set aside the necessity for transferring the cattle and provisions to the interior, so that with the very cheap markets that now prevailed both town and country rejoiced. To add to supposed enjoyments, the brewers of Belfast advertise a great reduction in the price of beer, on account of the cheap markets. Turnley and Batt are the first on the list of these generous-hearted men.

On 12th November, 1801, John Brown, the Sovereign of Belfast, died in office, in his 51st year. Amyas Griffith, of Belfast notoriety, frequently mentioned in the first volume of this work, died in September, 1801.

In an advertisement of what is called the largest soap manufactory in Ireland, situated in Waring Street, it is said that the opening from Waring Street to Chichester Quay is now nearly completed.

The Insurance Company was established in 1802. There were twelve Directors, the most important and wealthy merchants in the town. They announced their capital as £60,000; John Macartney, secretary, states that business has commenced at the Ballast Office. This was on a little narrow quay, almost at the foot of High Street, long since swept away. The Ballast Office stood upon it. A person is advertised for, to superintend the making of an extensive embankment and water-wall at the

foot of Waring Street. This must have been at the Lime Kiln Dock. It was never anticipated that in 70 years it would be no longer existent. Tomb Street, not then in being, or at least but in embryo, is now immediately adjacent. It was so called from David Tomb, whose death took place in 1799, and is so announced by Mr. Henry Joy, in the fly-leaf of the *News Letter* of that year. The petty improvements of 1802, compared with the immense works of modern days, strike us with astonishment. These improvements must have been some very short distance eastward of the Bank in Victoria Street. "That well established Slaughter House, Stables, and Cow Houses in Corn Market are to be let in 1802." This proves the antiquity of the Flesh Markets in Corn Market, and their still rude condition at so late a period. Among the town improvements of 1802, it is mentioned that a sufficient sewer is about to be made down North Street, from the Horse Barrack through Bridge Street to the River. The situation of this Horse Barrack has so far eluded all enquiry. The Committee of the Poor House, in advertising a sermon to be preached by Dr. Drummond, say that no benefit to the House has yet arisen from the water, nor will there be till the water-works now in progress be completed. Arthur Thompson now advertises his farm of Fountain Ville, which is described as containing 10 acres, 1 rood, and 30 perches, Irish measure. The land and gardens are in the highest state of perfection. This advertisement refers to the place now known by the name of the Crescent, and the large buildings and fine streets all around. It is, in truth, at present nearly, if not altogether, the most valuable ground in Belfast, as a private quarter. Yet this large farm in 1802, now so valuable, was let by the Marquis of Donegall for £30 a-year. Fruit Hill, in Malone, is announced for sale, containing 12 Irish acres, for £8 15s. 0d. per annum. The yearly value of both places now would be beyond our power of estimating. They are absolutely the town, or the suburbs of the town.

A long communication relative to an Asylum for the Blind in Belfast next appears. It is from the pen of Dr. Alexander

M'Donnell, brother of the more famous Dr. James M'Donnell of Belfast. The Asylum for the Blind, however, was established, and its progress is frequently spoken of in the next few years.

The top of Donegall Street must have been vacant at this time, and like places now far distant from it, that are waiting for manufacturers of some kind, or speculative builders, is thus advertised in 1802. "A large tenement in the upper part of Donegall Street, with frontage to Donegall Street, Carrickfergus Street, and Patrick Street, is to be let. No part of Belfast is better supplied with an abundance of fine spring water, or better adapted for carrying on any manufacture where such is required."

Does the Ekenhead Presbyterian Church now stand here?

"April 2d, 1802. Died at Beer's Bridge, on Wednesday last, the Reverend Sinclair Kilburn, son of the late Ebenezer Kilburn of Dublin, and late minister of the Third Congregation in Belfast." Great praises of Mr. Kilburn follow this short announcement.

"April 2nd. We are happy to announce the arrival in Belfast of the Marchioness of Donegall, accompanied by her son the Earl of Belfast. The Marquis is expected in a few days." The Earl here mentioned, and who saw Belfast on this occasion for the first time, is, it will of course be understood, the present Marquis of Donegall. It was possibly also the first visit which the Marchioness paid to the town; at least no such formal announcement of a former visit is known to us.

"April, 1802. On Thursday evening, after a well spent life of 77 years, died Stewart Banks." No information is given as to his personal history, but very warm praises of his life and conduct. He had been Sovereign of Belfast in 1755.

At a dinner given to Mr. Skeffington on the 16th of April, 1802, one of the toasts was, "A happy and speedy improvement to the lately discovered Colliery on the Marquis of Donegall's Estate." Where was this colliery? The language would imply that it was then at work, and not altogether one of those abortive attempts to discover coal in the vicinity of this town.

There must have been vacant spaces in the South Parade in 1802, as a Building or Edifice of some kind is said to be erected in that locality, for the display of a great Panorama of the storming of Seringapatam.

On the 28th of April, 1802, died that most distinguished Belfast man, Dr. Alexander Henry Haliday, whose grandson, or, as some have told us, son, General Haliday, lately died possessed of a large estate, chiefly in the parish of Carnmoney, and we are not aware that any member of this family now resides in Belfast or its neighbourhood. Much was written about Dr. Haliday in our first volume, not anticipating that another would be sought for from the author. He cannot refrain, however, from quoting the following additional remarks:—

“Long the most distinguished physician in this province, in whose character there was a singular combination of delightful talents and enlightened principles, from the elegant scholar, the polite gentleman, and the ardent friend, he was so universally known, beloved, and respected, that we deem it sufficient to say that during a great part of the last century he was considered an honour to the town which gave him birth, and that his departure leaves a blank in society not to be filled up in the present generation.”

So far the Editor. A very long Obituary follows, probably, from the signature, written by Dr. Drummond. It says—“In principles of civil and religious liberty he lived, and in these he died; they were the bond of his youthful friendships, and they consolidated the attachments of his mature years. These were the associating principles of Maclaine, Bruce, Plunkett, and Mattear, the principles of the venerable Camden and the amiable Charlemont \* \* \* Farewell, venerable and virtuous man, admired, beloved, honoured for wit, worth, and wisdom, you have closed your length of days, but your name will live long in hallowed remembrance.” This seems to have been the end of a funeral sermon by Dr. Drummond on his illustrious friend.

How many people in Belfast at this day ever heard the name

of Dr. Haliday, or know anything of his history? Some have gone so far as to say he was not a Belfast man at all. Nothing could be more baseless. His tomb is yet to be seen in the Clifton Street Burying Ground.

“John Gregg advertises a good house to be let on the north side of Smithfield Square. The tenant may be accommodated with a contiguous field which will graze two cows.” This field must have been close to Smithfield, probably Mill Field or part thereof.

The property of Stewart Banks is to be sold, and is described as that property in Castle Street in which he lived, and other premises in Barrack Street and Lettuce Lane, all with extensive gardens, and the description would prove them to have been fine properties, quite in character with the favourite locality, as it was in the eighteenth century, and as would appear by this and other advertisements up to the year 1802.

Now for an instance of social intercourse in 1802. “On Wednesday night the Marquis and Marchioness of Donegall gave a Grand Ball and Supper in their House in Linen Hall Street, to a numerous party, consisting of more than 200 of the Nobility and principal Gentry of Belfast and its vicinity.” A long account is given of the Ball and Supper, but no name is mentioned of any guest but that of Mr. Skeffington. This was to celebrate the arrival of the Marquis and Marchioness, whose intended visit to the town was mentioned a few weeks before. Still the names of the Belfast Gentry of 1802, whom the Marchioness delighted to honour, might have gratified modern curiosity. Many regulations are issued in this year, proving what must appear to our eyes a rude state of matters. “Carts and Cars are forbidden to traffic or draw within the town unless shod with iron, and the owners thereof are directed to assemble with those vehicles quarterly in High Street before the wall of the old Churchyard for examination.” Six Belfast Shoemakers were transmitted to Carrickfergus Jail by the Sovereign, for entering into a combination to raise their wages, though no clear account is given of the offence.



The editorial comments on the enormity of this crime, if it can be so called, and on that of certain masons formerly noticed, and who were similarly treated, are rather curious. "How would trade go on or the town improve if such actions were permitted?"

Various advertisements show the old state of the town by infallible evidence. No. 5, Plantation Street is named, with a large rear fit for a Factory; a Coach-House, Stables, and building ground are advertised in Buller's Field, which was a name for Donegall Street, or at least for a part of it. It was observed by a sagacious correspondent that the men of enterprise in Belfast could no better employ their ability than in opening a coal mine as near to this town as possible. Very true, if the place to do so could have been pointed out. The old Salt and Lime Works, at the foot of Waring Street, are noticed to be disposed of. This business was described in Vol. I., but is here more explicitly told. They say that the business of boiling salt and burning lime has been carried on at the foot of Waring Street for much above forty years; the situation for this business, or any other, cannot be exceeded by any in this town. The frontage to Waring Street is 150 feet, to Quay Lane 72 feet, with a front of nearly the same towards the Dock. All the streets existing in the town in 1802 are named in advertisements for contractors to attend twice a-week to carry away the refuse collected by the inhabitants. Many of the streets mentioned are swept off and forgotten, except in newspapers, or in the gossip of old inhabitants. Manure heaps were in places now remote from such offensive accumulations. The White Linen Hall is mentioned as the nearest mark to one of the places where such was collected.

These slight notices, indicative of the topographical condition of the town in 1802, could be extended to any length. The few specimens preceding will be enough to show their character.

The embers of the Rebellion were not yet quenched even in 1803. This was the year in which Thomas Russell, more frequently called in Belfast Captain Russell, attempted to



renew it. Absurd and wild rumours, threatening letters, arrests, and discoveries of concealed arms took place.

The following letter, addressed to no less a personage than Lord Massereene about the end of 1802, was brought up to Belfast to exhibit to some friends in the town as a sample of Donegore literature :—

“ LOARD MUS RENE

“ I being one Moyles calf I wish to meet you apou Dinagar hill upon the 2 of this nixt munth you and your ewes [yeomanry] of antrim not only but your oringemen and I will Let you Know the strength of moyles calf and her Bolld defenders for we never will be conkert till we have your head of and day about with your yos [yeomanry] for their crulty to the crappys.

“ But you may depend your head will go upon the Block very Schoartly for Hieing [driving] the yes [yeomanry] at us.

“ I shall ad no more ad Presant but Remins your greatest enimy Moyles Callf and does not fear you the least.

“ Myly and Mylys Calfs prisint there compts. to the earl of Musreen. Expects the plusur of his Compan for diner the 2 November on Donagar hill as the know he is fond of fish tail he will have a nice dish of well drest Pikes.”

At a great public meeting the yeomanry of the town were increased, and the duty of all to join them was impressed upon the inhabitants. The Marquis was present at this meeting, showing that he had now become pretty much resident in the town, and that he took an interest in its affairs. Yet it could not have seemed delightful in his eyes. A Police Act was obtained this year, which cost £1,200, and the Police Committee formed upon its foundation advertise for the loan of £2,000, for which they offer interest at the rate of six per cent.

An embankment at the Short Strand was undertaken in February this year. All that was proposed to be expended was £300, which would not be given till the work was done. This was from the Co. Down Grand Jury, and must have cramped the overseers a little. The Short Strand, as is well known, ran

from the end of the Long Bridge to the Lagan Foundry, and was as unimproved then as any part of the town on the County Antrim side.

The monthly Card Club dined at the Donegall Arms, but this is unimportant compared with the State Trial of Colonel Despard and his treasonable fellow-conspirators. This was not a Belfast affair, but it excited great interest here. In the early part of 1803, the combination question had gathered very large proportions, as this notice would prove. The difference between that year and the present is worth noticing. It is—"Whereas many unlawful combinations now exist among the different workmen, artificers, and manufacturers of the town and neighbourhood, by which an attempt is made to regulate according to their pleasure the price of wages." This was treated in a very summary and vigorous manner, as has been already shown. The Bishop of Down resided this year in Castle Street, next door to Mr. Hamilton. The militia were balloted for in Belfast. This was the time, and long after, when substitutes were paid for by those who had no taste for military service, and who happened to be drawn for that purpose. There were five breweries and two distilleries in Belfast in 1803. One of the latter was in Barrack Street, where the heavy stump of the old chimney still remains; the other was in Ann Street and corner of Lower Church Lane. In the paucity of anything approaching to distinct matter relative to Belfast, the following marvellous account of the actions of a Belfast man in another sphere is copied:—

"Died, on Tuesday last, at his house in Peter's Hill, Mr. James Wier. An incident of great intrepidity occurred in the Life of Mr. Wier. At the commencement of the American War, on his way from the West Indies to Liverpool, the ship in which he was belonged to himself, besides his *All* which was on board. On entering the Channel, they were captured by an American privateer, who took out the whole of his hands, except himself, a man, and a boy, and in lieu thereof put on board two officers and thirty men belonging to the privateer,

with a quantity of arms, and shaped their course for the coast of North America. When within a day's sail of Boston, this little party seized the arm-chest, ordered eight of the privateer's crew that were on deck forward until they closed the hatches on the officers and the rest who were below, and, wonderful to relate, those three kept the deck for five weeks, day and night, until they brought the ship and crew safe into Liverpool."

It is circumstantially related in the paper of 22nd April, 1803. Wier's conduct is greatly extolled for his kind treatment of the prisoners after their arrival in Liverpool. Mr. Wier's property in Peter's Hill was advertised to be sold. A tan-yard was on it.

We do not remember in either ancient or modern story so remarkable a narrative. It shows what a genuine man can do when pressed by necessity.

The war between England and France, which continued so long and produced such strange results, was commencing: The Sovereign called a town meeting, to consult what they were to do in the emergency.

The yeomanry were formed in a more extended and systematic manner than they were before, to arouse warlike ardour. Two new corps were raised, and great satisfaction expressed at the alacrity of the town in coming forward at this momentous crisis. It is recommended to extinguish and forget party differences, the present crisis demanding the head and hand of every one in the community, and not the revival of old disputes. The military spirit was thoroughly kindled; hats and other paraphernalia of yeomen were on sale in the shops immediately, and another cavalry regiment of Belfast men was formed.

Napoleon is called all manner of abusive names, down even to the appellation of a Corsican charity boy. All this must appear strange to those who can take a philosophical view of the Napoleonic history of late years.

This alarm, which was met with such promptitude, was not without cause in the opinion of the Belfast people. The military in garrison were put under arms for some hours; additional

sentinels were placed at the different entrances to the town. Several individuals were arrested and brought into town. This was the result here of Emmet's rebellion of 1803. The loyalty of Belfast was not to be moved by this insurrection, which was a Dublin affair. The yeomanry here and the volunteers were inspected by the General, and all were on the alert. They were both put on permanent duty in the town, as it was rightly thought to be a bad time for rebellion, the war with France having then commenced. In a letter from Dublin to a gentleman in Belfast, it is said that several arrests have taken place in the metropolis, one of them a Mr. H., a gentleman of respectability and high in the law. This was Mr. Holmes, long known afterwards as leader on the north-east circuit. The public opinion seemed to be that the salvation of Ireland depended on the unanimity of all classes of Irishmen. Our old acquaintance, Thomas Russell, had not gained wisdom by experience. His proclamation announcing himself as General-in-chief of the Northern Division was circulated here, and was more arrogant and silly even than the printed declaration of 1798.

A reward of £500 was immediately offered by the Government for the apprehension of Thomas Russell, late of the 64th Regiment of Foot, in whose name a rebellious Proclamation had lately been circulated. The inhabitants of Belfast, to evince their loyalty, subscribed a similar amount to bring to immediate punishment such persons as attempted to disturb the public peace of the country. The alarm in Belfast was excessive, which this notice will prove.

"It having been represented to Brigadier General Campbell that the Country People are unacquainted with the nature of the Out Posts placed on the approaches to the Town of Belfast—they are, therefore, informed that these Posts are for the safety of the Town, and by no means to interfere with those coming to Market or on other business, unless by examining Carriages, Carts, &c. The garrison is prohibited from purchasing anything

whatever on the way to the market, and the usual protection to property will be afforded.

“No person permitted to pass the Gun Posts after it is dark, unless by a pass from the Brigadier General or others authorised to grant such, and until six in the evening, during which time the Inhabitants are required not to be out of their houses, on the doors of which their names are to be placed. Those coming to town to purchase Lead, Iron, or other Materials, which coming into the hands of improper persons may be applied to bad purposes, are to obtain a Permit from the Board of Magistrates. Any person having cause of complaint will make application to the Town Major.

“By order of Brigadier General Campbell.

“WILLIAM FOX, Town Major.”

We have not been able to discover with certainty whether Thomas Russell visited Belfast when organising the rebellion of the North in 1803. The probability is in favour of the supposition. But it was in the County Down his movements principally took place. He appeared there in the uniform of a French General, and his display of this costume to a score or two of the country people was as vain as it was ludicrous. He was arrested, however, in September, and sent to Dublin, but afterwards transmitted to Downpatrick to be tried. On the 19th October his trial and condemnation occurred. The only Belfast persons who appeared at this trial were Sir James Bristow and Mr. Skinner, who were both on the jury. Mr. Joy, the future Chief Baron, was the chief counsel for the defence. This ended Thomas Russell, so well and so long known, and in a certain degree respected, in Belfast. His fellow-conspirator, Emmet, had in the meantime been also executed in Dublin.

The County Antrim Commission to try prisoners accused of High Treason found two persons belonging to the parish of Carnmoney guilty of High Treason, and both were executed. Russell's Proclamation was extensively circulated in

this parish, and had many supporters. Emmet's rebellion was one of the weakest ever attempted in Ireland. Money is generally spoken of as the sinews of war. The entire treasure chest which could be raised to carry on this war very little exceeded £4,000.

The names of Change Alley and the Stone Bridge were still continued in advertisements in 1803. A Lease of a Tenement on the west side of the former is to be disposed of. It is said to be opposite the Stone Bridge, that famous locality of other days.

A house to be sold in Ann Street immediately opposite the Barracks. These were the Barracks taken by the Government in Ann Street prior to the Rebellion.

It will be remembered that in 1803 there was no Bank in Belfast. The monetary business devolved on the Discount Company. The Landlords refused to take their rents in anything but gold. The discussions on the subject were long, and many letters appeared. The point of the complaint was that this practice greatly enhanced the value of guineas in the country, leading to much inconvenience. This subject will come in more naturally when saying a few words relative to the general trade and commerce of the country, and the nature of the circulation.



## CHAPTER IV.

1804-1806.

THE following must appear to have been a very rude state of our markets in January, 1804. The Sovereign orders all butchers to sell meat only in the public and regular shambles in Hercules Lane and in Arthur Street, that the disagreeable and filthy nuisances that infect every avenue to the town may be thereby removed. The corn is directed to be bought only at the public crane in Smithfield. This seems to be the time when the public place for the sale of Grain was first put up in Smithfield. The entire order was directed against private selling in the streets, which deprived the Sovereign of the little dues rising from the Corporate Bye Laws. This notice respecting Donegall Street proves that the improvements mentioned in 1802 had failed to meet all the wants which that street required.

As a topographical statement the following is remarkable. The Police Committee took up an idea last year of making a gravelled footway from the end of the buildings in Donegall Street to the Poor House. This intention was much approved of, as it is one of the principal entrances into the town, both for pleasure and business. It is now urged that it shall be carried into effect, as, besides its leading to one of the noblest charities of which any town can boast, the health of the soldiers who have to pass that way at all hours of the day and night requires it, and to them dry feet are of the first consequence, and wet ones the most fertile cause of disease to which armies are liable. The notice sufficiently proves that this part of what is now a great street was mere swampy ground, destitute of any road or footway for passengers, either civil or military. But every

person could relate the same of places in Belfast. The swamps and fields of one generation have become the streets and squares of the next, and the Donegall Street change is no further worthy of notice than that it refers to a locality now almost venerable and old-looking.

The house No. 29 Chichester Quay, "as at present let to the Marquis of Donegall, is to be disposed of. Would suit a moderate merchant or manufacturer." The possession of this house, stores, and yard by the Marquis is not otherwise stated, or the cause of the Marquis owning such.

The principal Inns in 1804 were the Donegall Arms and the White Cross, both in High Street; Gillet's in Wilson's Court, the King's Arms, North Street, the White Hart, Church Lane, and the Cumberland Arms in Hanover Quay, which last was a very old inn, greatly frequented by the English ship captains, whose coal vessels lay in the dock adjoining.

A very large property is advertised for sale, which had belonged to James Martin. It was in Castle Street and Mill Street. The usual information is given of the gardens which then existed in those streets, of the river, and Crooked Lane, which was the first name of Bank Lane, some parts of the premises extending back to these places.

A telegraphic communication between Ireland and Scotland is suggested by means of the Lighthouses at Donaghadee and Portpatrick. It is singular to read of telegraphs of this character in the light and in the discoveries of modern days. The ingenious projector says he can communicate across the strait by night as well as by day, but he keeps to himself the means of doing so.

The Fever Hospital and Dispensary in Smithfield were advancing yearly in importance. Long accounts of their proceedings appear at intervals. Their yearly expenditure amounted to £254 in 1804. The Police Committee are entitled to the thanks of the community for the improvements about to be carried into effect, of covering in a great part of the river which encroaches on High Street. They advertised for con-

tractors to arch over the river in a substantial manner, from the old Weigh House to 10 feet east of Prince's Street. This was in March 1804, and was the last part of the old Town River to be closed up. This notice rather proves the accuracy of the recollection of some old inhabitants, who affirm they remember the river still open a considerable way up High Street, and the length of the covering now completed could be stated if the exact spot on which the old Weigh House stood could be discovered. It was the general Weigh House of the town when all the markets were in High Street.

The Old Bank Buildings are thus referred to in 1804—"The above premises are now undergoing some alteration, whereby the front Ground Floor has been converted into Three Shops, two of which are still to be Let." An Advertisement appears from Landlords in the County Monaghan, that they will take their Rents in Bank of Ireland notes for one year in consequence of the dreadful scarcity of specie. Our Belfast Editor commends the conduct of these patriotic gentlemen in very warm terms. We have no account of the landlords in the County Antrim or elsewhere following this example in 1804. Being only for one year, not much risk was run. Notices of this kind are more in place in narrating the trade and currency of Belfast, which will appear in a collected form.

Great improvements in Mail Coaches are mentioned in May 1804, but they cannot be used without extensive repairs and alterations on the roads, as they go on springs; the former coaches being heavy and cumbrous.

There was a Market House in Arthur Square in 1804, on the site on which Mr. Gaffikin's establishment now stands. It was a mean building, with a small brick steeple. It was not long in use, and was probably got up to preserve the markets in or near a locality in which they had been for generations.

The Bank Buildings, before the shops were completed, were opened for the public exhibitions of the day. A wonderful Automaton Figure that played the piano, an animated Rope Dancer, and other figures that seemed to live, were exhibited, to

the astonishment and delight of the numerous spectators who witnessed their performances, in the Bank Buildings. The mechanism, the exhibitor's secret, was no doubt ingenious.

The inhabitants of the town were greatly annoyed with foreign beggars (sometimes these characters are called banditti), and the Poor House authorities announced that such would be taken up and committed to confinement and hard labour. They also ordered that the privileged or Belfast mendicants should not be permitted to beg without being *badged*. This badging was an old practice in Belfast, and badges may yet be frequently found among collections of old-world articles.

In the summer of 1804 the bricklayers of Belfast combined to raise their wages. Two of them fled from the town, and escaped deserved punishment. "What would become of all the great works of elegance and utility," says the Editor, "now being produced in our town, or contemplated, if such combinations be permitted?" We confess our inability to point out these great works of 1804.

George Frederick Cooke, the most celebrated actor, the advertisement says, who has visited Belfast since the time of Garrick, is now about to appear in the Theatre. Great preparations are being made; the house will be lighted with wax candles, and Dublin prices will have to be paid.

The members of the Council of the Chamber of Commerce (whether this was the first institution of the kind in the town the language does not inform us) are here named:—

William Sinclair, Esq., President.

N. Batt, Esq., Vice-President.

Robert Bradshaw.

Jas. T. Kennedy.

Hugh Montgomery.

Gilbert M'Ilveen, junr.

Hugh Crawford.

William Tennent.

James Cunningham.

Campbell Sweeny.

Robert Hyndman.

Henry Haslett.

George Joy.

John Turnley.

Robert Getty.

George Langtry.

Cunningham Greg.

On the 26th August, 1879, the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the Empire met for the first time in Ireland, and that meeting was held in Belfast, the commercial capital of the kingdom. Its original insignificance and its recent commercial eminence were, of course, duly commented on, including the remarkable fact that the site of the building in which this great meeting was held was about 60 years ago covered by the sea.

In the Council Room of this building is to be seen the famous picture, executed by Romney Robinson's father, which represents a great Review of the military and yeomanry of Belfast. All persons subscribing were to have their portraits introduced. "It will be curious," Mr. Robinson says, "to hand down to future generations the likenesses of the principal inhabitants of the present day assembled in one of the most beautiful parts of this improving town. It will be an additional value to the undertaking that the ladies will be introduced as gracing this interesting scene." An exhibition of this great picture was proposed by Mr. Robinson.

This is really a grand picture, and fully bears out the words of the painter, that there is much gratification in transmitting to posterity the names and features of those who have been distinguished in their generation. It contains the Marquis of Donegall, in uniform and on horseback; Sir Edward May, Bart.; Sir Arthur Chichester; Mr. Robinson, the painter, his wife, and their son Romney, a little boy in a fancy costume; Mr. Edward May, James Douglas, Thomas Verner, G. A. S. Harvey, Gilbert M'Ilveen, William and John Sinclaire, William Johnston, Hugh Crawford, Narcissus Batt, Doctor and Mrs. Bruce, Dr. Drummond, Mrs. Graydon, Henry Joy, Thomas Whinnery, John Smith, Robert Batt, Nathan Gregg, Robert Getty, John Barnett, George Joy, Rev. W. Armstrong, Dr. James M'Donnell, Alexander Stewart, Mrs. Batt, &c.

The picture is nine feet broad by six feet high, including the frame. It has forty-four figures in all, some on horseback, but the greater number on foot. It is dated 1804, and the painter's name, Robinson, is printed upon it.



Not one of the persons thus represented in full dress costume or military uniform is now living, of course, except the little boy Romney Robinson. So far as we can recollect, the likenesses are generally good, and several more whose faces are not shown, and whose names are not given, are on horseback, and many others, besides some ladies. The work is altogether a Belfast historical picture, and of very great interest and value.

Mr. Robinson was a painter of some reputation, and was resident in Belfast in 1804. His painting-room is described as having in it a beautiful portrait of Romney Robinson, his son. The boy is represented as strewing flowers on the grave of Romney, the eminent painter, and the father so named his son in commemoration of Romney, who had patronised him. The boy, then about ten years of age, was in every sense a precocious genius. He was patronised by Dr. Bruce, and warmly admired by all in Belfast. He wrote a volume of poems, which was published in this town. Romney Robinson afterwards deserted the muses, became a scientist and scholar of eminence, and is still living at a very advanced age. Endeavours were made to suppress his poems, but these were not successful, as copies are still to be met with in old book collections. Many specimens are also in the *Belfast News-Letter* of 1804.

Farms are advertised near the Malone Turnpike Gate. Few now remember where the Malone Turnpike was. It was on the crown of the hill, nearly opposite where Mount Charles now is, surrounded by a sort of little village of mean houses. When the Lisburn road was made, the Turnpike was brought lower down, to catch the travellers of both roads. Fine fields and gardens are announced to be let adjoining the Malone Turnpike, which, it was said, would greatly increase in value on the completion of the new road projected into the town, which would enter by Arthur Street. We remember, and it must have been several years after 1804, when a person from the County Armagh, coming to visit an old friend in Belfast, complained of the way into the town by which he had been induced to come, and which led him in at the back of the Linen Hall ditch. He



said he would never travel that way again, as his horse was nearly up to the saddle-girths, but would travel in future by the good old path of Sandy Row, Mill Street, and Castle Street. But the changes about Malone Turnpike are quite indescribable. We remember looking at a splendid garden of white currants and other fruit where there is now a large and substantial educational establishment and the station of the Central Railway. Splendid nurseries and gardens were also in the vicinity of the Salt Water Bridge, where now all is smoke and bustle.

1805.—Dr. MacLaine died at Bath this year. There is a lengthened notice of him in the paper of 11th January, 1805, signed J. (probably Joy). He says—"Dr. MacLaine was a native of the North of Ireland, and educated for a Presbyterian minister. The season of his youth was spent in Belfast, where he was long remembered with delight by a numerous circle, now nearly extinct. He there formed those early attachments which make the longest impression . . . and among the first was that for the beloved and revered Dr. Haliday. About the year 1745, when in his 22nd year, he was invited to Holland to take the pastoral charge of the English Church at the Hague. . . His reply to Soame Jenyns was received in England with the respect it deserved, and a volume of his sermons addressed to his own flock was equally esteemed. His great work, however, was the translation of *Mosheim's Ecclesiastical History*, for which he received most unbounded praise—no doubt quite deserved." But there is no specific disclosure about his occupation in Belfast. He was eighty-two, and must have lived a long while in Bath; unless this sentence can be taken as a Belfast recollection, there is no other. "After the various scenes of a life protracted till his 82nd year, an absence of half a century neither diminished his love for the friends he had left behind him in Ireland, nor his delight in recalling to memory the spots endeared by early acquaintance." He merely says that he never expected to revisit his native land and the scenes of his youth, but was shocked at the rebellion and the disorders in the country, &c.

James M'Henry, so well known afterwards in Belfast, published his first work, a poem, in January this year. The modest price of sixpence-halfpenny would prove its diminutive size.

Great bands of depredators were in the town this winter. Numerous names are mentioned of those who suffered from their nightly burglaries.

Valentine Joyce, a Belfast merchant, died in February, 1805. The account of his funeral, as a trait of the customs of Belfast when still feeling the semi-military spirit, is worth preserving. "He was escorted, on Sunday, to the place of interment by the Belfast Cavalry, of which he was a member, the merchants, infantry, and volunteer corps, and buried with military honours."

At a large meeting of magistrates in Belfast, the Marquis of Donegall in the chair, they say "that the Sabbath has been for some time scandalously profaned in this town and neighbourhood." Therefore they forbid, and say "they will levy fines off all who are sent before them who sell spirituous liquors on Sundays, or who draw loaded carts through the streets or on the public highways, or who sell fruit, or groceries, or any other commodity, or who keep their houses open after twelve o'clock at night to sell spirituous liquors." This magisterial order is not very well expressed, but easily enough understood. It proves rather a lax state of society generally, yet touches on matters which are still a subject of contention.

Ballydrain House again advertised, held under Lord Donegall, containing 117 Irish acres, from Nov., 1793; rent, £30 2s. 0d. Mr. Younghusband had the Green at £200 a-year. George Alexander Stewart was the owner.

Mr. Talbot appeared at the Theatre in October this year, but one who created much greater enthusiasm than even Mr. Talbot was now acting in London with excessive applause. This was the young Roscius, or Master Betty, who had first played on the Belfast stage in the preceding year.

There is an excellent account of young Betty in Mr. M'Call's History of our Staple Manufacture. This youth, so distinguished

for theatrical genius, was a native of Lisburn, where his father was a respectable linen merchant. When he had exhausted his theatrical energies on the stage, he relinquished that profession, and entered the Church of England as a minister, and acquitted himself, we believe, with great ability and acceptance. He lived to be old, and died only a very few years ago.

"The Publisher of the *News-Letter* announces that he has taken that house in Bridge Street next door to Dr. White, where the *News-Letter* will be delivered, orders received, and also at the printing office, Joy's Entry, as usual. November, 1804."

A new Circus as in course of erection at Mr. M'Cracken's yard in Donegall Street.

"At this time," says the Editor, "when the town is devoid of all amusement, there is little doubt that the Circus will be well supported." This plan of fitting up special places for equestrian performances would seem to have fallen off for a few years at least, as the writer well recollects such exhibitions were always in the open air in his young days; and he may mention here, if for nothing more than as an incidental remark, that he has seen such in what was then waste ground at the farthest end of Donegall Quay, now in streets and warehouses, and in other places as unlikely for Mr. Merryman and his associates to display their skill. What will the public think of this?

The organ of public opinion says in 1805—"We feel proud of having been the cradle of the two best poets Ulster can boast of, namely, Hafiz and the young Robinson. We give a specimen to-day of the latter at the age of nine and a-half years, being a translation of 'Ovid's Description of the Palace of the Sun.'"

The *Belfast Commercial Chronicle* first saw the light in 1805, and was continued far beyond the time of this brief history with great credit and efficiency. The Police Tax this year was again announced as having been applotted at £2,500 on the town. We know what this then great sum, now considered paltry, was needed to effect.

An advertisement appears of "125 feet of ground, with a

stream of pure water flowing through it." This was probably the ground on which a part of the great York Street Mill now stands. Also, behind the above, 700 feet on the south side of the Lodge Road, which it fronts. The ground is excellently adapted for the residence of private families, affording every advantage of both town and country. "To be let for 56 years in such lots as may be desired. The delightful situation of this ground is not surpassed by any about the town, as it commands a complete view of the town and harbour." It is difficult to identify places described in so loose and general a manner. Died in London, Stephen Haven, Esq., born in Belfast, went to America in his youth, settled in Nassau in Bahama as a lawyer, and in a short time received the appointment of Solicitor General; realised a good fortune, and intended to spend the remainder of his days in Europe, but died as stated. His father was probably the Sovereign of Belfast.

An excellent meadow and some fields are to be let in Buttle's Lane, immediately behind the Poor House.

There was not a spot at the same distance from Belfast more entirely in the country than the back of the Poor House in 1805. Buttle's Lane before mentioned passed along the back wall of the Poor House, passed the gate of the burying ground, and continued a narrow path, in the same direction as the present Antrim Road, as far as the New Lodge Road.

George Langtry advertises in 1805 that any vessels of his, trading to London or Liverpool, will be open while they can hold a package for any goods Mr. Robert Delap has to ship. This was in connection with a dispute between the shipowners of Belfast, in which Mr. Langtry seems to have taken the part of Mr. Delap. This dispute had continued for a length of time, and given occasion for repeated advertisements in the public prints.

There is a most valuable account of the introduction of the Cotton Manufacture into Ulster, and its state in 1805, when it was at the very summit of its prosperity, in the *News-Letter* of May, 1805. Some of the details appeared in the first volume,

but to those who desire to know the history of the Cotton Manufacture in Ulster more fully than we have space to afford to it in any part of this work, the details given in the paper mentioned are well worthy of notice.

The leading article of the newspaper of May 21st gives a very glowing account of the town, from which the following is but an extract:—

“A young lady of only six years of age is to appear at the Theatre and speak an address written for her by that other young genius, Romney Robinson. . . . The rapid improvement of Belfast in streets, buildings, and various elegances of life are noticed by all who visit it.” It then goes on to praise the taste for painting, music, and the fine arts, which have now reached a great head in Belfast. The article does not say a word more of the elegant streets and buildings of 1805.

It is, however, the second time the town improvements are specially mentioned, so there must have been something of it. The Editor rises in his terms of praise, saying “that it must be a subject of pleasing reflection to the inhabitants that the genius of three of the most wonderful children has been nurtured and developed in this town. These three are Betty, Robinson, and the little girl of six years old, now performing in the theatre. . . . We trust, therefore, this town will be as much distinguished for the elegant arts as it has long been for industrious habits and high commercial integrity.” Have these expectations and hopes been realised, or are we still in the outer courts?

It was certainly unexampled to have in our Theatre a child of six and a-half years playing to crowded audiences many nights in succession, reciting poetry which had been written by a boy of eleven years of age.

The character in which the young phenomenon, as she was generally called, appeared was that of Norval. The power of depicting the stronger passions—revenge, hatred, despair—were beyond the powers of a child, so that she could have had no



claim whatever to the title of a "Tragedy Queen." The young phenomenon, with whom Belfast was so delighted, failed afterwards altogether in London. Readers acquainted with theatrical history may perhaps trace her after career. Her name was Mudie.

Another subject of a very different kind now engages our attention. The notice is, "Any person willing to contract for finding the materials and building the new Quay at the back of Ann Street." This was one of our abortive projects. These quays were made, and timber was floated into them for sale. The timber yards were arranged round this dock, now Police Square. They have been closed up and are now forgotten. New houses are mentioned as being built in 1805, many of which are still standing, but now old and degraded. New stores about the Docks were also built at the same time, but no public building of any character to justify the description given in a preceding sentence.

Atkins, the veteran manager of the Theatre, appears to have been retiring about this time. The season is reported as very gay; the Circus in Donegall Street; Miss <sup>Lindrick</sup>~~Lendrick~~, the famous maker of worsted pictures; Johnston, Bannister, and Mrs. Siddons are mentioned as having been then, or very recently, acting on the Belfast Stage. It is rather to be regretted that the Theatre should occupy so large a portion of our space, but it really seems to have engaged a proportionable interest in the minds of the Belfast people of 1805. The meetings of the present day for objects more varied and more exalted were unknown to our predecessors. New matters have sprung up since then, as our daily papers testify.

The Monthly Commercial Report of July, 1805, makes the price of Sugar, exclusive of the duty, from 49s. 6d. to £5 12s. 0d. per cwt.; Hyson Tea 5s. 2d. per lb., besides the duty. These prices would be alarming to the housekeepers of the present time. But prices of every article were proportionably high. The war prices, indeed, which the old will still remember, were coming on.



On Sunday the yeomanry were reviewed. This was not in Belfast, but in a distant part of the County Antrim. The Belfast and other yeomanry corps acted in the same manner often on the Sunday, and their firing on that day was mentioned as being particularly well executed.

The Marquis of Donegall was very properly a promoter of agricultural improvement. Hay Park, which was on the old Newtownbreda Road opposite to Ormeau, was the home farm of the Marquis, as we may reasonably suppose from the following notice:—"On Tuesday last was celebrated the Harvest Home. In the afternoon the Marquis, accompanied by his two sons, visited the scene of festivities." The account describes the improved implements the Marquis has introduced at Hay Park, and is altogether very pleasing. The two sons above mentioned were the present Marquis and his next brother, Lord Edward Chichester, the future Dean of Raphoe. The Marquis, though engaged thus in the praiseworthy pursuit of agriculture, and so popular and well liked, could not escape depredators; valuable sheep of an improved breed were stolen from Hay Park, and 50 guineas were offered for the discovery of the offenders, to be paid at Donegall House in the town.

Our little domestic history was for a time cast into oblivion by the news of the great battle of Trafalgar, which took place on the 21st of October, 1805. It was, we may presume, immediately after it the Nelson Club was formed here. It had its seat of occupation in Donegall Place, a short distance below the Imperial Hotel; was composed of the principal gentry in the town, and continued till recent days, when the shops of the great street in which it was put it out of sight.

1806.—This year, though important in the great events which affected the nation, does not seem to have been productive of very stirring incidents in Belfast. Still, small as they may have been, they must be preserved.

Could the Road between Belfast and Newry have been still unfit for travelling in this year? Let it have been so or not, on the 3rd of January a New Coach is advertised to leave Dublin

for Newry, to arrive in 12 hours, and to leave Newry for Dublin on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.

It will, therefore, be no way remarkable to find the means of travelling difficult at an earlier date. In 1786 the Reverend Mr. Thomson of Carnmoney was in Dublin, and he wrote a letter to his family at home then, desiring that the horses should be sent to meet him at Newry. He had taken his seat in the coach a week previously, expected to arrive at Newry on the evening of his travelling day, and hoped to find the led horse with the boy on the other to meet him there. He would reach Carnmoney the following day, so that it was a two days' journey to Belfast from Dublin. His directions as to where the boy should feed the horses—twice on the road with a pottle of oats, but that hay would serve them at Newry—are most precise. He is particular in desiring that his saddle should be kept dry.

This is introduced chiefly with the view of showing the speed of travelling, and also as proof that there was not so great scruple about Sunday travelling as in these days, as the conveyance was not the Mail, but is described as an "Elegant New Coach." More remarkable still is it to find a notice of the method of conveying goods to Dublin. A company was formed in Fountain Street, Belfast, which proposed to carry, under the protection of a Guard, goods to Dublin in 40 hours, at 5s. 5d. per cwt. A Covered Caravan travelled with the carts, carrying eight passengers, also protected, it may be presumed, by the armed Guard. It is a long and most precise advertisement, descriptive of the nature and advantages of both conveyances. It was probably successful, as at the end of the year the prices were raised to 6s. 6d. per cwt.

The Glasgow trade was equally primitive. Robert Gemmill was engaged in it, and advertises his three little vessels, of 35, 71, and 79 tons respectively, as very suitable for carrying cotton machinery from Glasgow. The London traders are all advertised to sail under convoy, or with the first convoy.

Several new houses are advertised to be let in Pottinger's Entry. They are described as three stories in height, and suit-

able for private families. Private families now have different ideas of atmospheric influences, though it would not seem that, even in 1806, such influences were yet generally appreciated. In some cases they were, to the surprise of the inhabitants. Among the other buildings, there was a barrack in Ann Street, which had been taken by the authorities in 1794, in view of the impending troubles. Quietness had come in 1806, so they advertise the building to be let for the unexpired years of the lease. The military must still have continued in it, as at the end of the advertisement it is said—"An Artilleryman will attend to show the Concern." The Commissioners of Police, in 1806, managed great part of the affairs of Belfast, now under the charge of our great Corporate authorities. They advertise that they have ordered the sum of £2,500 to be allotted for the lighting, paving, cleansing, and improving of the town for the year. How far would this sum reach now for general expenditure? and how utterly insignificant it seems placed beside the vast amount now raised as the revenue of the town?

The educational establishments of the town in 1806 call for notice. There was first the Belfast Academy, presided over by the Rev. Dr. Bruce. Dr. Drummond had a school at Mount Collyer, which had a good reputation. The Rev. Robert Acheson had a school in Ballymacarrett, and afterwards in Church Lane, not very far from the site of the Belfast School, founded in the 17th century by the Earl of Donegall.

Instances of liberality are occasionally narrated which will probably rather surprise some people. Thus, in 1806, a Charity Sermon was preached by Dr. Drummond, in the Meeting House of the Second Presbyterian Congregation, at which several members of the choir of the Cathedral of Armagh attended and sang two anthems, two psalms, and a chorus from the Messiah. This was said to be done by permission of the Lord Primate. On another occasion, in the same Meeting House, and in the same year, and also for a charitable object, Lord Castlereagh was present in the uniform of his regiment, and assisted in receiving the collection after the sermon. It is true his father was, or had

been, a Presbyterian. It was on this occasion, or at least before he left the country, Lord Castlereagh was entertained at dinner in the Donegall Arms, now a huge drapery establishment. His father was present, and expressed himself greatly gratified with the honour Belfast had done his son on the occasion.

The letters of correspondents are sometimes rather instructive, and sometimes not a little enlivening. One is on the subject of the literary standing and pretensions of Belfast in 1806. The writer says this question has recently been agitated in the town with much warmth. He does not decide it, or attempt to decide it, finally, but asserts that a turn for letters, amounting to more than a smattering, was very generally diffused among the people of Belfast. It was often said in those days, when the town was so small, there was greater knowledge and taste for reading, in proportion to population, than there is now, with all its incalculable advantages. Another correspondent takes up the question, which is still in a manner an unsettled one in the town. There were only seven houses of worship at that time in Belfast—at least only seven capable of raising any money, and the question was agitated whether the entire seven should be opened on the same day to advocate subscriptions to the Poor House, or one only, and all the others to be closed. The latter plan is contended for in very good language and cogent arguments. It would, of course, be now impracticable. The plan of simultaneous charity sermons in one day was, by this account, first mooted in 1806, though that of having one church open for the purpose, and all the others closed, appears to have been that adopted. Even with that practice, there was much liberality shown. A sermon for the Poor House and Infirmary, preached by the Rev. Dr. Drummond, in December, 1806, produced the sum of £214 5s. 6d.

An outcry was raised, in 1806, respecting a contemplated desecration of a certain graveyard. No account is given as to the place in which this graveyard was, but, from internal evidence, it could have been no other than the old town cemetery at St. George's Church, in High Street. Whether

this remonstrance stayed the scheme for a time, it is impossible to say; but neither it nor any other cause could avert its execution for more than a few years.

There were few deaths of any noted persons connected with Belfast in this year. Two medical men, of considerable local reputation, are mentioned in the obituary—Dr. Mattear and Dr. Apsley. There also died one of the old Volunteers—James Lendrick, whose name is not yet forgotten. He made a Survey and Map of the County Antrim in 1780, now a curious and antique production; acted as agent to the O'Neill estates, and was otherwise an influential person in the county. A more important person than any of the preceding also died this year—Earl Macartney. A lengthened notice of the event is inserted in the paper, recounting his services to the country and his rare and splendid acquirements, but not a word of the connection of his ancestors with Belfast. He is described, in fact, as of Auchinleck, in the Stewartry of Kircudbright. A history of the Macartney family, sufficient for the purpose, will be found in the first volume of this work.

The few preceding desultory details exhaust all that can be collected of the history of the town in the year 1806. As a general matter, it may be mentioned that the town throughout the year appears to have been prosperous. Trade was very considerable, and manufactures, chiefly of cotton, gave great employment to the operative classes, and great speculation to the wealthy. Seeing the magnitude of Belfast at this day, it is almost ludicrous to read of its enterprise and its elegance in 1806. Yet they had no steamships at their quays. Their cotton mills would scarcely be considered in size more than little offshoots to the linen mills of this day; no gas to enlighten the town, no railroads or tramways; above all, no great spinning mills, now the distinctive feature of the town. All these, and many others, were unknown, but still the men of the day were working according to their lights and knowledge, and doing their best to lay the foundations of Belfast as it was to be in two generations more.



## CHAPTER V.

1807-1810.

PAYMENTS had still to be made in gold at the beginning of 1807.

The tenement on the south side of Ann Street called the Barracks is advertised to be sold, leased for 31 years, originally, to the principal officers of His Majesty's Ordnance, at £150 a-year. The Government wished now to get rid of their dear bargain.

This year, the gentlemen composing the Belfast Volunteer Corps entertained their officers at dinner in the Donegall Arms. Such entertainments were frequent, and this interchange of civilities, where all were nearly of the same rank, kept up, we may suppose, the military spirit of the town. Mr. William Johnston presided on this occasion.

A spinning house is mentioned for sale. This is an unusual term. Could this have been an incipient House of Industry which was occupied by hand-spinners?

In order to facilitate the trading intercourse between this port and England, a new set of London, Liverpool, and Bristol traders had been introduced to public notice by a large number of the leading merchants of the town. Shares £100 each are advertised; no person to have more than five shares. This was in February, 1807, and was the prospectus of a great trading company, but we cannot tell what course it took. It may have been brought into existence by the success of other individuals or companies, as there were very considerable trade and enterprise in Belfast in 1807. A very large ship is reported as having been launched this year from Mr. Richey's shipyard. It was 400 tons burthen, and was the property of Hugh



Crawford. A great crowd of spectators of all classes assembled to witness the launch of so large a ship.

There were no bazaars, or any of the means of raising money, now so universal, and, in many instances, so productive. The charity sermons chiefly supplied the place of such, and were very frequent, both for the Poor House and the Dispensary. An established and permanent institution for charitable purposes, however, was the Repository, which remained till lately. A Charity Ball, for the benefit of the Repository, in the Exchange Rooms, is announced, with the following observations:—"It is hoped the Ladies and Gentlemen of Belfast and the neighbourhood will attend, in order to contribute to an institution which has already been of infinite service to many poor industrious women, and which, if supported, will give employment to numbers who have no other means of support. Admittance, 3s. 4d." Three elegant dwelling-houses to be let in Arthur Street, on the east side, with large yard and range of stabling, and a large yard called Driver's Square. This locality must have been very backward in 1807.

There were as great speculations and as many plans in 1807 for supplying the town with water as in these days. Here is one of the most noteworthy:—"It is proposed to have a Steam Engine erected, at a moderate expense, to raise water sufficiently high to flow, if required, into the upper stories of the houses in the town, where it might be ready to extinguish fires and supply the inhabitants. The adaptation of this plan would administer to the comfort of the inhabitants, who have of late shown such a laudable spirit for the improvement of their town, and who are at all times ready to listen to any thing that may tend to their advantage. We are convinced that nothing more than a hoist is necessary to bring this plan into immediate execution."

Mr. Robinson has a considerable exhibition of pictures in the Exchange Rooms in 1807. He had painted the grand picture of the review of the Belfast yeomanry, and he announces now that it will be disposed of by raffle.

The Parish Church was receiving some attention in this year.

August 27th.—At a vestry held this day in the Parish Church, it was unanimously resolved—"That the thanks of the Parishioners, in Vestry assembled, be presented to Mr. James Mc'Clean for his care and trouble, voluntarily undertaken, in procuring an excellent Bell and Clock for the Church, in the choice and purchase of which the interest of the Parish was very particularly attended to." Had there been no Bell or Clock in the Parish Church before this time?

"Two Cut Stone Entrances and two Gates for the side wings in front of the Church. Any persons desirous of contracting for the Stone and Iron work of same can receive all information at the office of Mr. Hugh Crawford."

"Wanted, by the Police Commissioners, a person who will undertake the spouting of the houses in Mill Field Street and other streets adjoining. The expenses of the same are to be levied off the people." This was a very rude state of matters for so large a town as Belfast.

Madame Catalini, the first singer in the world, the advertisement says, was in Belfast in 1807. Boxes, 11s. 4½d.; Pit, 8s. 9d.; Gallery, 5s. 5d.; from which it would appear that the management was justified in calling her the first singer in the world. The house was lighted with wax candles.

The Public Bakery this year consumed 447 tons of flour. There was a necessity, in 1807, to supply the poor with coal in winter. The plan adopted was to lay in the winter supply in summer. A yard was taken and filled with coal when cheap. The yard was then closed, and none was sold or given out until dreary winter days came; the coal was then sold to the poor, under regulations, at a far cheaper rate than it was at the quays—in fact at the summer prices. The weigh-house for dead pigs began in 1807, and continued till our own day.

1808.—A great complimentary entertainment was given to the Marquis of Donegall, by two hundred of his tenantry in the town and country, in January, 1808. This was probably the most magnificent banquet ever seen in Belfast up to that time.

There is a woodcut in the paper representing the position and form of the tables. The Marquis was lauded as the best and kindest and most liberal landlord in all Ireland. Mr. Robert Bradshaw presided at the principal table. There were illuminations and rejoicings at the same time at Doagh and Fisherwick, but no intimation is given of the cause. Could it have been on account of a great defeat the Jew brokers of London sustained a few months before from the Marquis in Chancery in Dublin?

“Just Published, in one volume, 100 original Anecdotes, by a Gentleman of Belfast; Printed by Hugh Kirk, &c., Park’s Entry and No. 2, Fountain Street.” This might probably have contained some interesting Belfast matter, if it could be obtained. As it is, the notice merely preserves the name of a printer and the location of a printing office in 1808.

John Stewart, Esq., published a poem called *The Resurrection*, in five books. It has been beyond our power to discover to what place or family he belonged; he is called “our townsman” only.

The Postmaster General, instead of the insecure and uncertain mode of conveying the Post hitherto adopted, by carriers on horseback, says he has appointed four-wheeled carriages, with guards, on the cross lines of road. This is rather a barren notice. It does not state whether any of the conveyances were near Belfast, and is so far inconclusive. The terms North Gate and Mill Gate were still retained in 1808, though the gates had long passed away. The Police Commissioners announce that one and sixpence per ton will be charged for the carriage of goods within these two points.

18th March.—“It was thirty years yesterday,” says the Editor of our Belfast paper, “since the commencement of Volunteering in this country, which originated in this town; and every succeeding anniversary, for many years, was the day on which the delegates from the different Corps in Ulster met to arrange their annual reviews, which were then the pride of Ireland and the astonishment of the world.”

This was, to say the least, very magniloquent language; and

yet, though the feelings of the town were much subdued, and a new military force occupied the ground, it is pleasant to see that the glorious days of the Volunteers could still be praised.

Mr. James Boomer occupied the house in Mill Street formerly the residence of Thomas Sinclair, Esq.

Death of Hugh Cairns, 8th April.

Death of the widow of Waddell Cunningham, April, 1808.

The first number of the *Belfast Magazine* was published in September, 1808. This was the only periodical that had any lengthened existence in Belfast, having continued for six years. It contained many valuable political papers, and articles on general subjects, of much interest and ability.

If it were not for the poor, and the interest taken by the inhabitants of the town to provide for their wants, this history would be very meagre in materials to form any thing to interest. The times have entirely changed in this respect, as in every other. Still the notices of the poor, when entered on in detail, disclose or suggest other facts, which supply the place of general narrative. We shall, therefore, note here the state of the Poor House and the number of out-door poor in the town when no Poor Law existed. At a meeting in the town in this year, to consider how the mendicant poor were to be provided for and the sum necessary for the purpose raised, the poor of the town were then stated to be 122 in number, at £7 10s. 0d. each annually for lodging and food, which would amount to £915 0s. 0d. The English Poor Law is adverted to in the debate, and a suggestion is made that the vestry should be empowered by Act of Parliament to levy a rate off the inhabitants for the support of the poor. This, if it had been carried out, would have been compulsory out-door relief in a modified form. At the same time, there were 148 old persons in the Poor House, and 143 children.

“To be Let, No. 10, Waring Street, occupied, in 1808, by William Tennent, built by the late Nat Wilson for a cotton warehouse. Applications regarding it to be made to William Tennent, at the New Sugar House in Waring Street.”

A paper on the Linen Manufacture of Ireland is in the Transactions of the Literary Society. It is the first time this society, though several years in existence, is noticed as a newspaper item.

Robert Gemmill lost his life this year in consequence of falling between the quay and a ship in the dock. He was a native of Scotland, and active in the cotton and shipping trades, but there are none of this family now in Belfast.

Madame Tussaud's famous Wax Works were exhibited at No. 92, High Street.

This was the time when everything was taxed. The hearths and windows were particularly looked after. Twenty-five windows were charged £8 2s. 6d., a tax not less onerous to the payer than absurd in itself.

In accordance with a resolution, the law agent of the Marquis of Donegall was desired immediately to collect all the interest due to the Corporation, that is, to the Charitable Fund thereof. The Funds of the Corporation for charitable purposes are fully explained by the Government Commission in 1833-4. They seem to have been partly disposed of for other purposes, and generally not well looked after. The Corporation was now desirous of employing their funds for charitable purposes. It is to be feared the collection was difficult. They, however, pass another resolution, stating that £400 be immediately raised from the fund named to erect twenty-two alms-houses for the reception of the mendicant poor. A committee was appointed to superintend the building of the said houses, and a piece of ground was taken from the Marquis of Donegall for the purpose. They order that the sum of £100 be given to the clergymen of the town, for the relief of poor housekeepers and tradesmen who are disabled, from various causes, from working at their trades; and that the interest due to the Corporation be annually appropriated to the various charitable institutions on the feast of St. John the Baptist. We cannot tell whether the twenty-two houses here spoken of were ever built, or the Cor-



porate funds disposed of in the manner stated. It is possible the House of Industry, one of the best charities that ever was in Belfast, and which was commenced in the following year, superseded them.

“Business commenced yesterday, the 1st of August, 1808, at the Belfast Bank. The rising opulence of Belfast renders such an establishment highly necessary.” It was thus the first established of our private banks of this century.

There was a reservoir behind the public fountains in Fountain Street to increase the supply of water for the use of the inhabitants, augmented by some new springs that were led into it this year. So important was this supply considered, that it was publicly opened on the birthday of the Marquis, and the usual and deserved praises are given to him for the attention he had bestowed on this matter. The additional springs were granted free of rent. Mr. Bunting, whose name in connection with the ancient music of Ireland is known far beyond the bounds of our town, had his merit acknowledged in Dublin in the warmest manner. A Harp Society was formed here, and flourished for many years.

The travelling intercourse was now of some importance. The following notice, which we copy verbatim from the paper of September, 1808, will present the state of travelling at that day as compared with our railway journeys at the present time:—“We notice with pleasure the accommodation afforded to the public by the several stage coaches, &c., lately established connected with Belfast. The coach which Mr. M'Coy some time ago commenced running to Lurgan, Newry, and Armagh, has frequently obtained such a number of passengers, that he has been under the necessity of employing a second coach, and by these transporting 30 or 40 passengers at once. It is only a few years since the mail coach was found sufficient for all the intercourse on the Dublin road. Our highways and streets are now enlivened by the driving of the Royal Mail coach. The Newry Fly, the Lurgan and Armagh coach, the Lisburn coach, the Carrickfergus, and other vehicles, are convincing proofs of



the rising opulence and increasing population of this town, so justly denominated the Metropolis of the North."

In August, a cotton mill in Wine Tavern Street is advertised to be sold. Deposit, £500, in Belfast Bank notes. These may possibly have been the first issue of notes from the bank.

A house in Custom House Quay is advertised as one of the first residences in town for a gentleman's family, commanding a beautiful prospect of the Lough.

A Belfast prophet, whose name is, unhappily, suppressed, writes much about comets and Bonaparte, affirming that a comet will soon appear which will be stationary, a certain proof of the fall of Napoleon.

The Belfast Insurance Company announce that they have now a capital of £100,000. Their office was at 191, North Street.

At a meeting of the Harp Society, twelve blind boys were introduced, and played on harps, two of which were made by an ingenious mechanic in Belfast. Arthur O'Neill, one of the last of the Irish bards, was the teacher, and it was considered that a great triumph had been gained by Belfast in its being the place from which the music of our forefathers emanated in modern days. The same mechanic had built two organs in this town, which would be ready for exhibition at the next meeting.

"We hear that a second Bank is about to be established in this town. Mr. Douglas's concern in Bank Street and Hercules Street, formerly occupied by Mr. Waddell Cunningham, has been purchased for this purpose. The Belfast Commercial Bank is the name spoken of for the new undertaking."

"Mr. Williamson proposes to make a new map of the town, but, from the streets lately made, and the uncertain direction of others, it will be Spring before any further progress will be made." Many of these projected streets were in the direction of York Street, but of course incalculable numbers of those now in use were unthought of in the time of Mr. Williamson.

There is a lengthened account in the December newspaper of

this year regarding a new coach which was to run from Belfast to Derry, and which was to commence on 5th April next. "As no mail-coach has ever run on this road before, every gentleman is bound properly to repair such parts of the road as are defective." There is much more to the same effect, all showing the unimproved state of the roads, and that they were unfit for coach travelling.

1809.—The Town Sergeants were still kept up by the old Corporation. This year they were Richard Moore and James Alderdice. Subscriptions were raised, or attempted to be raised, in Belfast in 1809, for the assistance of the Spanish patriots. The largest contributor was Francis Turnley, one hundred guineas; the next, Thomas Bateson, of Orangefield, thirty guineas; the total collected, £650 7s.

Mrs. Brown, widow of John Brown, the Sovereign in 1801, died this year at her house in Donegall Street.

The Dublin Caravan was still in operation in 1809. Fountain Street was yet its headquarters for departure, and its arrival was at the same place, with its old regularity.

Grain this year was nearly at famine prices again. Meal was 24s. 6d. per cwt.; Wheat, 21s., in bank notes; Barley, 12s. 6d.; and Oats so high as 15s. 6d. The prices were occasioned now by the Continental wars. The above four main articles will afford a criterion of the selling value of all other commodities. And there was great distress among the working-classes; relief societies were being formed as at the end of the year 1878. The death of Alexander Hamilton, called the last member of Parliament for Belfast before the Union, took place in March this year. He was the last independent member, so far as independence could be said to have existed in combination with the patronage of a Nobleman. In 1809 the mail coach ran all the way to Derry, and country gentleman are exhorted to see that the roads are kept in proper repair.

The yeomanry of Belfast now amounted to 600 men. The famous case of the Duke of York, Colonel Wardle, and Mrs. Clarke agitated the politicians of Belfast, as it did those of

almost every large town in the empire. The Duke was accused of allowing commissions in the army to be tampered with, and Colonel Wardle, a member of Parliament, brought the matter before the House. The town meeting here on the subject was called by Mr. May, on the requisition of a large number of the inhabitants. The object was to present an address to Colonel Wardle, and return him thanks for his independence and public spirit, in charging the Duke of York with serious malversations in his office of Commander-in-Chief of the army. The resolutions were carried, though strongly opposed by the Marquis of Donegall and Mr. May. The Marquis, in his speech, made an attack on Mr. Narcissus Batt, saying he had lately become a banker, and was courting popularity and, we in these days may presume, custom to the Bank; that he never expected to see a gentleman, whom he had often beheld in regimental garb commanding the yeomanry, act such a part, yet here he was, united with others in a disloyal and adverse course against the Crown and Government. Mr. Batt defended himself with great spirit, and proclaimed his loyalty, and that his only object was to unite with his fellow citizens in denouncing a great public scandal and grievance. The Marquis, Mr. Verner, and Mr. May had no supporters, and the resolutions were carried, and no doubt presented to Colonel Wardle. It was not by any means a party question, as persons here of entirely opposite opinions had their names to the requisition. Students of the political history of George the Third will understand all about this question, which to the ordinary person of this day is almost an unknown story.

The Income and Expenditure of Belfast from the 11th February, 1808, to the 15th February, 1809, are explicitly stated in the following paper:—

*2nd May, 1809.*

#### POLICE OF BELFAST.

An explicit account of the state, the amount raised, and the expenditure is desirable. It is therefore submitted as it appears in the paper of the above date.

From the 11th February, 1808, to 15th February, 1809.

RECEIPTS.

Cash in Treasurer's hands, ... ..	£407	4	7½
Taxes Collected, ... ..	2913	7	1
Arrears of Taxes, ... ..	1	2	9
Manure Sold, ... ..	385	1	10
Spades Sold, ... ..	1	15	0
Fines Levied, ... ..	21	0	1
Carmens' and Porters' Licenses, ... ..	25	8	9
	£3755	0	1½

DISBURSEMENTS.

Sweepers, ... ..	£385	16	3
Paviors and Labourers, ... ..	282	1	7
Horses, Carts, and Drivers, ... ..	517	7	6
Sand and Gravel, ... ..	157	5	3
Paving Stones, ... ..	67	16	4
Kerb Stones, ... ..	466	11	10
Sewers and Grates, ... ..	320	1	7
Lighting Lamps, ... ..	626	4	6¾
Painting and Numbering, &c., ... ..	23	13	3
Printing, ... ..	8	5	8
Fire Engine, ... ..	26	15	8½
Rent, ... ..	43	6	0
Incidental, ... ..	18	16	9
Clerks' and Collectors' Salaries, ... ..	94	2	6
Inspectors' Salaries, ... ..	97	16	5
In hands of Treasurer, ... ..	618	18	11¼
	£3755	0	1½

There were thus no night police in 1809.

The formation of the first bridge over the Lagan, beside Ormeau, is more explicitly referred to than in any incidental notice hitherto written on the subject. It is stated that it will shorten the road to Belvoir to two miles, and will be one of the most beautiful outlets from the town. This was not the present

bridge, but another on the same spot, which, badly built, or in some manner imperfect, soon gave way. There was a proposal at the same time from Lord Dungannon, the then owner of Belvoir, to divide the expense of rebuilding it, but Mr. Bateson bought Belvoir shortly after.

A school for teaching the Irish language was attempted or opened in 1809, at the instance of the Harp Society. Application regarding it was to be made to the Rev. Mr. Groves, in Pottinger's Entry. He was a clergyman of the Established Church who had been an unsuccessful candidate for the appointment of Classical Head Master in the Academical Institution. He was an ardent promoter of the Harp Society, and, as we see, he was interested also in the revival of the Irish language. The latter object was a failure. Mr. Groves had afterwards a respectable school in the town for a time.

The Belfast Glass Works, in Carrick Hill, advertised, in July, 1809, the sale of flint glass, cut and engraved. This business has long been extinct.

Speculations were begun now respecting the Work House, or House of Industry, an important and very much commended institution.

The first notice respecting the House of Industry is as follows:—"The Society for the employment and relief of the poor of Belfast are happy to inform the inhabitants that they have adopted such measures as they deem sufficient to prevent mendicity, and they trust that all contributions may be henceforth withheld from beggars, as the only effectual method of co-operating with the Society in promoting the success of the undertaking. The Society also request that such of the inhabitants as have [spinning] wheels, and can lend them for a short time, will have the goodness to send them to the Work House until a sufficient number be procured for the institution, when they shall be returned in good order."

Such were the flax spinning mills of 1809.

The application for the wheels had perhaps been attended with success, as the committee advertise in the next paper for a

number of wheels, new and second-hand. This institution continued for more than twenty years, working with great success. It was a kind of poor law union house, with many very satisfactory features. The Bang Beggars were dressed in a sort of uniform—at least they had scarlet collars on their coats.

The following letter, referring to the House of Industry, may perhaps be acceptable to our readers, though it makes the subject rather lengthened. But this house existed so long, and was so highly appreciated, that this letter can scarcely be said to be out of character with the nature of this slight production.

“HOUSE OF INDUSTRY.

“TO THE EDITOR OF THE NEWSLETTER.

“SIR,—As the gentlemen who have undertaken the management of the above useful Institution are now about collecting the annual subscriptions for its support, it may be proper to recall to our recollection not only the ease and comfort which we enjoy, but the extraordinary relief to our pockets arising from its establishment. . . . By calling at the Steward’s office, information will be received relating to their humble and indigent brethren, which must be as gratifying to them as it is really honourable to the town. It is a common saying, and too true at present, that these are hard times, that it is difficult to procure money, and that there are so many calls on us for charitable purposes, that it is impossible to attend to all. . . .

“The feelings of the humane public are completely answered by the laudable exertions of those gentlemen who, with the most unwearied assiduity, have devoted their attention for a considerable time to this object; and if those who have been in the habit of contributing to importunate and often thankless mendicants 6d., 1s., or half-a-crown every week, would now advance to the House of Industry, not the whole, but even a reasonable proportion of that sum, the funds would be found most ample for all the purposes of that Institution, and the contributions would be thankfully paid to those who take the trouble to collect and superintend their expenditure, instead of



being given, as is now too commonly the case, to those with such an expression of countenance and such a tone of voice as if they came to extort our money from us. But that this establishment may be appreciated according to its value to the town, the following calculation is offered, which will be found not over-strained. The number of beggars in the daily practice of seeking alms has been ascertained to be 300 or thereabouts, exclusive of families. Supposing each mendicant to extort from the inhabitants 6s. 8d. per week—some have acknowledged they have obtained, on certain days, 15s.—the annual expense to the town for them would be £5,200. Upwards of 200 poor room keepers are relieved by the institution, who formerly, at a moderate estimate, may have received assistance through private sources to the amount of 5s. per week, and whose claims to relief have been found much more urgent than those of the habitual beggar. This expense may thus be taken at that sum, which is per annum £2,600. These two, added together, make £7,800. The sum required by the House of Industry to enable 500 families to obtain a livelihood, according to the plan adopted by the House of Industry, is for one year £1,200, to which add the earnings of 500 persons, at only 2s. per week, which would be £2,600. The sum annually saved to the town would be £4,000, and this independent of the grand object of turning those, who formerly subsisted by plunder, speculation, and vice, to habits of industry, order, and morality.

“I would not be understood, by anything said or stated above, to discourage that private charity which is a constant duty we owe to the distresses of our fellow creatures; the most acceptable exercise of it in the eyes of the Deity, and a most useful and important lesson to man, whereby he may learn to form a due estimate of humanity and the wonderful vicissitudes and instability of fortune.

“AN INHABITANT.

“1 *June*, 1810.”

One would almost imagine that the intelligent person who wrote the preceding letter was writing of the hard winter and

the bad times of 1878-9, rather than of seventy years before. He must have exaggerated in some points, we may now reasonably conceive, else the people of Belfast of those days were extra liberal in their gifts to the poor and needy.

No Poor Law then existed to abate the distress by compulsory means. But really, both at this time and on some other occasions, a system was introduced quite similar to the out-door relief of the present day, but supported by voluntary gifts and unpaid officials.

The celebration of what was called the Jubilee, meaning the time when George the Third entered on the 50th year of his reign, took place here on the 25th October, 1809. The only illuminations were in the Exchange Rooms and the Nelson Club. There was a transparency of the King before Donegall House.

A sermon was preached in the church by the Reverend Edward May, attended by the Corporation in state. Balls, dinners, and rejoicings of all kinds followed; the utmost harmony and peace prevailed, though the streets were thronged by greater crowds than had ever been seen in Belfast before. So great was the enthusiasm, that female children born at this time were often called Jubilee, though we have not heard that the name has been perpetuated.

On the Quay a House to be Let, occupied by Major-General Gordon. It does not say where or what Quay, but the probability is that it was at the end of High Street, so near the water as to be best known by the name of the Quay.

The death of the Reverend Robert Dobbs took place at the end of 1809. His funeral sermon was preached by Mr. May, at the request of the Poor House Committee. He did not long survive Mr. Bristow, with whom he had co-operated for many years as Curate of the Parish.

The Harp Society had another great meeting in December, 1809, to endeavour to revive the ancient music of Ireland and the Irish language. (The latter object has been attempted in Belfast by an abler scholar than the year 1809 could have

produced.) Great enthusiasm prevailed at this meeting; a number of blind boys were introduced, whose performances on the harp were much applauded. We believe it now no longer exists.

As a substitute, however, the town was gratified at the very same time by an exhibition in the Exchange Rooms, by an artist of the County of Antrim, called Percy, who, with recitations, represented what he called "The Freaks through Belfast," written by himself. The design of this Exhibition is undiscoverable.

We have not seen a copy of the "Freaks," nor had the good fortune to meet with any one who has seen it. It was addressed to the liberal, polite, and enlightened people of Belfast, which no doubt they were in 1809—at least we may suppose that many of them were so.

The death of Daniel Blow occurred in this year. There is a full account of the Blow family in the first volume of this work, and the death of Daniel, the successor to James, is merely mentioned here as a record of the time of the decease of an eminent and early printer and publisher in Belfast. He died near Dundonald, in his 92nd year, much respected for talent and ingenuity.

The year 1810 commences with an account of the formation of a Society in due form, to detect and prosecute to conviction such depredators as may dare to commit offences against either person or property in this town. The governing body, either local or general, now more properly undertakes this office. But this was the prelude to a Society soon after formed, called the Night Town Watch Association, which took effect about two years after, and again in 1816. The Author has introduced some notices of this Association in his first volume, thinking it so strange that no regularly appointed Watch yet guarded the town at night. As there were at this period many street robberies and personal assaults committed, the respectable inhabitants voluntarily banded themselves together to prevent and detect such crimes, and their names and mode of procedure

are detailed in a book still in existence, and are described as accurately and fully as appeared necessary, so that this allusion to the matter here will be sufficient. (The book here mentioned is the property of Wm. Malcolm, Esq., Belfast and Holywood.)

“The Belfast Assemblies will commence on Tuesday, the 23rd inst., and will continue once a fortnight.” These assemblies were long continued, and were the periodical amusements of the respectable classes in the town.

The prohibition of distillation from grain still continued in this year, and the prices of the necessaries of life were very high.

“Cunningham Gregg’s house, in Castle Lane, now occupied by the Earl of Westmeath, with fine gardens and office houses, offered to be let at £250 a-year.” This is said by some to be the present Imperial Hotel, and the offices from that point towards Calendar Street, but this is an error, as will be seen subsequently.

At a public meeting of the Committee of Smithfield Dispensary and Fever Hospital in 1810, thanks were given to the Marquis of Donegall for presiding and for promising to make a free grant for an hospital in a more suitable situation. The Committee were requested to take steps for building such an hospital as the town should have.

There were 309 spinners of linen yarn now busy at work in the House of Industry, producing, on an average, 550 hanks weekly; also one spinner of woollen yarn, 18 women knitting stockings, 9 women weaving calico, and 20 to 40 boys and girls picking oakum. 376 families received rations from the House weekly, consisting of soup, potatoes, and herrings. This was all very well so far as it went, and is only a small additional detail of the working of the institution added to the copious account already given of it in 1809.

In January, 1810, the two sugar houses then in Belfast were united, having been purchased by some individuals, who informed the friends of the two late companies that they intended to carry on the business in the New Sugar House under

the firm of the Belfast Sugar House Company. In consequence of this arrangement, the sugar house in Rosemary Street, which extended from nearly the corner of North Street, was to be sold, and a very large and valuable locality it was, being 120 feet in front. The Waring Street concern is called the New Sugar House. (It was in reality the older, having been originated in this place, so far as can be learned from old leases, in the 17th century, by George Macartney. It may have been relinquished during the long period that intervened between, and perhaps forgotten, and when resumed in 1810, was called the *New*.) The names of the firm are nine in number, with James Kilbee and Robert Tennent acting as managers. It did not continue for any length of time; and this trade, it is unnecessary to say, is quite unknown now in the town.

There were 700 lamps in the town in 1810.

Mr. Robinson the painter, and father of the eminent Romney Robinson, and who resided long in this town, died here this year.

The New Market is first mentioned in 1810. Building ground is offered in Great Edward Street, so called after Edward May, and adjoining May's Bridge. Great changes have taken place about this locality. The reclaimed ground here is of great extent, and has become very valuable for many general purposes.

A trial, followed by a conviction for murder, caused much commotion in Belfast in 1810. A ship carpenter called Morrison had a dispute with a Portuguese sailor, one of the crew of an American ship in the harbour. The Portuguese, whose name was Antonio de Silva, stabbed him to the heart with a dagger near Prince's Street. He was tried and condemned for the crime at the Summer Assizes. He was conveyed to the place of execution, which was at that period about a mile from Carrickfergus, attended by an immense concourse of spectators. So great was the crowd, as was the custom of the time, that though the distance was so short, it required an hour to reach it. The apparatus then consisted of



three tall columns, with a cross-beam, to which the rope was attached. They stood on the bare sea-shore, and were familiarly known by the name of the Three Sisters. The criminal was dressed in a white surplice, by his own particular desire, and accompanied by two Roman Catholic priests. Through Mr. Redfern, of Belfast, who spoke his language, and who had been interpreter for him at his trial, he denied his guilt.

Another example of death and the grave occurred in 1810, not of so sad a character as the preceding; so far from that, quite peculiar and original. An honest Belfast man left these directions to his executors—"Let as little as possible be expended on my funeral, my firm opinion being that what is so spent is nothing but a Robbery on the remaining part of the Family. Let my coffin be of plain Deal, painted either black or oak colour, which you like, with no escutcheons except the two holes at the end, neither name nor age on it; no hearse, no head-stone, no scarf, no gloves, no spirits, tobacco, or pipes. All these are utterly vain and useless, not meaning to restrict you, but exercise your discretion to a necessary refreshment to my particular friends and the bearers of my bier, as my house will afford. The Poor House Grave Yard being the nearest, though more expensive than the others, I suppose, and the money applied to charitable purposes, I wish you to give it the preference."

There was a general complaint in the town about this time that there was no suitable place of confinement for culprits, whereby many escaped, and much inconvenience was suffered. Money had been subscribed by the Grand Jury of the County for this purpose since 1803, and it was probably at this period the House of Correction at the end of Howard Street, then in the fields, was built, having, on a prominent place, in large letters, "Within Amend, Without Beware."

The Railing at the South side of the Linen Hall was put up this year. Previously to that time it was as mean and unsightly a ditch as could anywhere have been found.

A lot of ground in Donegall Square East was to be sold in



1810. All about was unbuilt on, except the few large houses on the south side of the Square, and Bashall's deserted Factory in the distance.

In this year the populace of Belfast rose and forcibly prevented a ship laden with meal from leaving the Quay. They were not contented with detaining the ship, but tore open the hatches and abstracted the meal, carrying it through the streets, and giving it gratuitously to all who followed, chiefly women with aprons and sacks.

The House of Industry refused to receive the receipts of an amateur Theatrical Performance, on the ground that it would be sinful to accept money acquired by such means (Mr. Greer's MSS.). This was a few years after 1810, when we might reasonably have expected the world to be wiser as time went on. They had, perhaps, forgotten their poverty in 1810, when they called on the town for assistance, alleging that their whole machinery, consisting of wheels and reels, was only worth £250, though they were £500 in debt, having lost much money the year before by buying dear flax to keep the wheels in motion. But those spinners were working gratuitously, and for charitable objects, which did not exempt them from trade losses any more than spinners on a large scale of this day.

The preceding sketch of our domestic history for the first decennial period of the present century may fitly be concluded with the prices of the principal necessities of life as they were in 1810.

Oaten Meal,	...	...	...	19s. 2d. per cwt.
Wheat,	...	...	...	15s. 0d. do.
Barley,	...	...	...	12s. 6d. do.
Oats,	...	...	...	11s. 0d. do.
First Flour,	...	...	...	38s. 0d. do.
Potatoes,	...	...	...	5d. per stone.
Butter,	...	...	1s. 3d. per lb. (18 oz. to the lb.)	

## FACTS AND INCIDENTS EXTENDING OVER A CONSIDERABLE PORTION OF THIS CENTURY.

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### CHAPTER VI.

**W**E have recorded in our previous chapters, in a consecutive form, the short and simple annals which comprise our history to the end of the year 1810. Much more to the same effect is accessible, if it had been considered desirable to go further into details so purely domestic and so entirely uneventful. Some important points worthy of being treated in a detached form, or an inquiry into which naturally arises from the perusal of the preceding chapters, will now be proceeded with.

In our previous little history, it must have been observed how frequently the town is praised for the elegance and beauty of certain public edifices then erected or in the course of erection. These buildings are unnamed, so that we are rather at a loss to discover in these days what or where they were. If such were executed, therefore, the accuracy of the terms elegance and beauty must surely have been rather misapplied. We know of no edifices erected between 1800 and 1810 at all answering such description. We had yet, up to the latter year, as we have elsewhere stated, the Five Meeting Houses, the one Church, and the single Catholic Chapel, and perhaps one or two other religious edifices within the bounds of the town. All these, together with the old Poor House and the Linen Hall, had been raised in the previous century, so that we really know not of any buildings to which the words apply. Suggestions may have been made and speculations indulged in, as there

are now, of great town improvements which would be made hereafter, but there were then neither the means nor the necessary knowledge to effect them. The town, therefore, continued, according to present ideas, very much unimproved, badly lighted, badly watched, and rather inefficiently governed, but yet possessing in its inhabitants the elements of the commercial and manufacturing eminence which it has since reached.

THE POPULATION of the Town in our short historic period will present something more definite. We think, then, that at its commencement in 1800 it did not contain more than 22,000 inhabitants, and in 1810 not more than 28,000, and it is possible that both estimates may be a little in excess. In 1814, when Mr. Thomson was teaching his pupils Geography in the Academical Institution, he said the town then was supposed to contain from 27,000 to 30,000 persons. There was no formal census of the population undertaken by the Government till 1821, or seven years after, when it was found that the number was then 37,000; so that our own estimate at the end of 1810 and that of Mr. Thomson's in 1814 cannot be far from the truth.

This will be satisfactory as far as regards the population of the town at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is not altogether conjectural. There are persons still living at whose birth in Belfast the population was not more than one-tenth of what it is now. The writer remembers 1810 in the town, when it did not contain much more, if any more, than one-eighth of the crowds which now fill its streets. Yet at a banquet lately given, when the subject of the unexampled increase of Belfast—a favourite topic on such occasions—came to be spoken of, the speaker, a learned lawyer, actually mentioned, what he considered a rather remarkable fact, that persons were living who remembered Belfast when it did not number one-third of its present people; so valueless are all conjectures destitute of *data* to guide a speaker, however wise and eloquent. As a further illustration of size and population,

it may be mentioned that the houses in Belfast in 1806 were only 3,514 in number, among which there were only 36 of four stories in height. The gross number would therefore be little more than the increase of the present town in three years. To place the matter in a still more striking aspect, three years building now would make up a town nearly as large as the Belfast of 1806.

Belfast has always been reputed a PRESBYTERIAN TOWN. But there was probably no time in which Presbyterianism was more influential than in the days of the volunteers, and up till the year 1820 at the least. The ministers were all eminent during this very lengthened period, and distinguished for their attainments, classical learning, and oratorical powers. The principal and most wealthy inhabitants of the town at that era were certainly Presbyterians. As evidence of this, it may be mentioned that of the fourteen individuals who were partners in the three private Banks, eight of them were Presbyterians, and some members of the remaining six partially clung to the same faith; and also, of the seventeen persons composing the members of the Chamber of Commerce of 1804, ten at least remained, as Presbyterians, in the religion of their fathers. The general merchants and manufacturers of the town would probably, if investigated, bear an equal proportion of dissenters from the Established Church. In proof of this, we publish the following very few examples. They are but a small part of a long list communicated by the Rev. J. Scott Porter, and are partly mementoes of the Presbyterian history of Belfast, and, as far as they go, good notices of some town families.

John Sloan and his family belonged to the First Congregation; Cunningham Gregg, a liberal and generous man, did also. Mrs. Batt was the wife of Narcissus Batt and sister of Mr. Cunningham Gregg, and an excellent woman. Her daughter, Miss Batt, was also a member of the congregation.

Robert and Alexander Gordon, wine merchants.

Miss Lyons was of the old Park family, and aunt or grand-

aunt to W. T. B. Lyons, Esq. of Brookhill. William Napier, the father of Sir Joseph, was a member till his death.

John Holmes, Banker.

John Holmes Houston, a truly worthy gentleman. A memorial to his memory adorns this place of worship. The inscription on this tablet will appear subsequently. Mrs. Houston, I imagine, was his widow.

Henry Joy was a member, and a constant attendant till his death, as were also his sons, as long as they remained in the town.

James Orr, the banker, was also a member.

John Martin, father of the late John Martin of Killyleagh. John junior erected in this place of worship a memorial window to the memory of his son Samuel, and a small Tablet to the memory of John and Elizabeth, his father and mother.

The Sinclaire family all belonged to the First Congregation—William, John, and Thomas. The widow of William, and her daughter, afterwards Mrs. May, attended public worship here also.

James Ferguson was brother of John S. Ferguson, son of Dr. Ferguson, and a descendant, it is supposed, of Dr. Victor Ferguson, whose name occurs in *Presbyterian Loyalty*, and a noted Presbyterian in the controversial days at the beginning of the last century.

William Cairns, father of the present Earl Cairns.

William Boyd, Fort Breda, and many sons.

James Bristow, director for many years of the Northern Bank.

Joseph Bristow and Captain Bristow.

Mr. Edmund Grimshaw, of Mossley.

Mr. William M'Cance, son of John M'Cance, of Suffolk.

John Suffern, brother to William and Murray Suffern.

Mrs. Johnston, widow of the Rev. J. A. Johnston. He was a man of excellent ability, and wrote some poems displaying great talent. I mentioned to his eldest son, a merchant in Liverpool, that they were worthy of being collected and published. He replied that he had never heard of them.

Mrs. Rowan (Dora Ogilvie, descended from Mr. Ogilvie, minister of the Presbyterian congregation of Larne, 1709). Her first husband was Mr. Blair, her second Major Rowan, whose son, by a former marriage, is the Rev. Robert Rowan, of Mount Davis, near Ballymena. Mrs. Rowan had no children. She lived at Merville, which was her own property, sold afterwards to Sir Edward Coey.

We have abbreviated the preceding communication to the utmost possible extent. The names here mentioned are but a few of many of a similar description. Many could also be found in the records of the Second and the Third Congregations. A change has come over the sentiments of many since that time, and the secessions to Episcopacy have been numerous. If such change be the result of inquiry and conviction, or if the adopted faith be even more agreeable to the feelings, no one has any reason to question its propriety; but if influenced by lower motives, such as the dictum said to have been a favourite utterance of Charles the Second, that "Presbyterianism was no religion for a gentleman," and which the pleasant little homilies he had heard in Scotland should have restrained him from saying, if he did say it, we refrain from offering any observation.

Let the changes in Belfast, however, have arisen from what causes they may, they have taken place. Sixty years ago, the common reproach, or rather jest, which we have heard repeatedly, was, that when "the young man from the country" first came into town to push his way in the world, he walked humbly to the Calvinistic or Old Light Meeting House; when he had become moderately rich, he drove to the New Light Meeting House; and when his coffers were full to overflowing, he was driven to Church. The man who first used this language we may consider rather imaginative, and feel disposed to deny that such graduated mutations occurred in reality; but a respectable and wealthy gentleman, who lived in Belfast between sixty and seventy years ago, has been mentioned to us as one who first walked to Dr. Hanna's, then drove to the



First Congregation for his Intermediate education, and finally ended in his carriage at the Church door.

The words *New Light* and *Old Light* are of local application, but as they were used—or one of them, at least—by Dr. Francis Hutcheson respecting Belfast above a century ago, we hope to be excused for adopting them on this occasion.

We had some intention of publishing the roll of membership of the First Presbyterian Congregation of 1813, which would have proved the accuracy of all we have written regarding ecclesiastical changes, but it would be unnecessary, the facts being perfectly well known. The Episcopal Church has gained, during the last sixty or seventy years, an accession to its ranks of many most estimable inhabitants of Belfast from the different sections of Presbyterianism. But in spite of such desertions, the ranks are always filled up again by new faces, and its influence and large numbers are still maintained, if the increase in its houses of worship be any proof of the fact.

The SOCIAL CONDITION of Belfast at the beginning of the century may perhaps be partially inferred from the miscellaneous notes which we have collected together in the early chapters of this history. It cannot well be said that those were social customs which sanctioned the confinement of men within prison walls for debts which they were unable to discharge, and the execution of others for forging bank notes, sheep-stealing, and bleach-green robberies (being equal to murder); but as the abolition of such has long since taken place, the question regarding them does not particularly affect Belfast any more than the entire country. The bleach-green robberies here were an unceasing source of trouble, but it is not necessary to do more than allude to this subject. More to our purpose is it to say that many of the bankers, linen bleachers, and large general merchants had begun to leave the town for country residences—some, indeed, had both. Others still abode in the town alone, though we are not aware that any found their way into the “genteel houses” which were offered in Pottinger’s Entry, Caddell’s Entry, and similar localities. The respectable shop-

keepers, on the other hand, always lived at their places of business, and there were private houses then, such as in High Street, Castle Place, Castle Street, Waring Street, Rosemary Street, and others, where now they could not be thought of, so excessive is the demand for shops and offices in the central part of the town. The small milliners' shops of other days have been entirely supplanted by immense palatial establishments, employing much capital, many hands, and a most systematically arranged administration. The clothier and the working tailor were then distinct characters—at least generally so—the one selling the cloth only, and the other sent for to his house, most probably in some of the dusky entries, to measure boys whose father had brought them to get their new suits made up. It is unnecessary to say how all this is changed, and for the public benefit, or for the public convenience. The apprentice boys of those days had to perform menial services, such as the young gentlemen of the present day would utterly scorn. Two youths, both of very respectable families, were fellow-apprentices to a large soap and candle manufactory in High Street, and they were called on daily to carry up in a barrel, supported on long poles, the water which supplied the establishment from the open river in that street. Such was one of the duties of the "good apprentices" of that day. The mention of the open river most probably places the event somewhat anterior to the year 1800.

It is said that the military in any town infuses into it a life and gaiety not to be otherwise obtained. If this be so with occasional visitants, what must Belfast have been during the many years in which regular regiments, volunteers, and yeomanry had possession of it. To be sure, the most of them were but carpet-knights, who had never seen service; still they had uniforms, swords, guns, and drums. These they kept constantly in service, and the ladies and gentlemen of the town paraded Donegall Place, then the only flagged street in the town, listening to the delicious strains. The yeomen approached nearest to civilians. We remember admiring the playing of a fifer, one Sunday morning, as being particularly shrill and

piercing. The fifer took our measure for a pair of boots the next day, having doffed for another week his military trappings.

But the country residences were not obtained all at once by our rich town inhabitants.

The borders of our famous bay were most in favour, though not always. We once heard an old man, from whom we were inquiring about these and other matters connected with Belfast, say that it was considered very strange that Mr. Lyons should have built his house of Old Park "on the top of a whinny hill at the foot of the mountain." This, not at all a correct description of Old Park, proceeded from one of the *profanum vulgus*, but people of that class generally convey popular sentiment as well as any other, and sometimes in more vigorous and plain-spoken language. He was incorrect in this instance, for though Old Park, built a century ago, may have been an unimproved land, and probably whins growing therein, it was, sixty years ago, a beautiful rural home, with fine gardens and trees, and a convenient distance from "the madding crowd." Now, in our time, the forty-two acres of which the demesne consists are advertised to be let in lots for villas or streets, which will doubtless be the case in due time.

Another trait of manners, or what may certainly be called a curious custom, was told to us by the same informant. He said he had seen a gentleman, reputed to be about the richest in the town, riding home to his country house, carrying, as he expressed it, two loaves at his saddle-bow. Now-a-days, it is the custom to deliver household goods of every description, for many miles, with the punctuality and despatch of the post. Then, such a practice was unknown, so that the custom for a purchaser to carry away his own parcels or goods was common, if not universal.

John Brown, Sovereign eighty years since, did not go very far from the town. Still, let it not be thought he retired to the rural beauties of Peter's Hill when he assumed the Sovereignty. He must have been there at a much earlier

period, as we have seen a letter dated 1770, in which Miss Brown of Peter's Hill is mentioned. This John Brown practised a custom which may have been general with others; he carried his own quart pot from his house in Peter's Hill to the corner of North Street, and, after getting it filled from a little brewery which then stood there, sat down to enjoy his beer in the open air. The social condition of the community has greatly changed since that era. There seems to have been less animosity, more gaiety, amusement, and sight-seeing, than there is now—always taking into account the vast disproportion in size between the town then and now. In July, 1805, the Orangemen of the town paraded, without riot or molestation, in Donegall Place; they then marched to church to hear a sermon, and were afterwards dismissed to their lodges. At the very same time, Mrs. Siddons was performing in the town. The Donegall family was then generally resident; the Marchioness gave entertainments to the townspeople and the gentry around, in Donegall House and the Exchange Rooms; besides which, the coteries, balls, and suppers were periodical institutions. There were no religious assemblies on week-days in places different from the Established houses of worship, no temperance assemblies nor huge bazaars. The people of the present time are perhaps wiser and better in their day and generation, and aim at more ennobling objects. Some of the old inhabitants, whose youth had been spent in the former century, still wore, in the beginning of the present, powder and queues. They strongly affected top boots and smooth faces, and would have quite condemned modern costumes, and been utterly horrified at the unshaven appearance of almost all the men of all classes in the town.

The in-door costumes of these bewigged and top-booted inhabitants presented nothing very remarkable. They assembled, when the dews of evening fell, in some of the old-established hostleries in Sugar House Entry, Caddel's Entry, or some other equally quiet corner, and considered it a sort of duty there to imbibe a certain number of tumblers of old rum punch.

The phrase "total abstainers" was unknown in those days, and it is certain there were no coffee-stands in the town, in the modern sense of the term.

Some little notice should be taken of the costume of the ladies of the latter end of the reign of George the Third, so far as such can be considered as customs of the time. The theme is far too great for our weakened descriptive powers.

Any one wishing to investigate this subject will find it treated in the work of the learned Mr. Wright, the *Caricature History of the Georges*, and it is to be supposed the Belfast ladies adopted the strange attire. The towering plumes, ascending to the skies, the waist between the shoulders (called, satirically, "no body"), and all the other distinctive features in dress of what we would now almost call a semi-barbarous age, appeared in our streets and assembly rooms, and were looked on with composure, as it is said that every age habituates itself to the costumes of the day, however at variance with good taste.

As a part of the social condition of the townspeople, the Theatre may be mentioned. It was always a favourite institution since the town acquired any size or importance. In the eighteenth century three places are named, and their existence fully proved in our first volume. They were "The Vaults," by which lugubrious title what appears to have been the principal one was known, the Theatre at the Mill Gate, and that in Rosemary Street. Other theatres have been mentioned, but they were only *improvised*, casual edifices, got up for special and temporary purposes. None of these theatres had constant managers, but were visited for a short season by Dublin companies. The first real manager of the Belfast Theatre whom we have found is Mr. Atkins, who was such in 1785, when Mrs. Siddons visited the town on a professional engagement; and at a gentleman's table in that year she praised Mr. Atkins for his probity and his excellent management, and said he was about to expend, or had already expended, the large sum of £2000 in improving the theatre of the town. It is probable "building" was the expression, as in 1792 the theatre in Arthur



Street, lately removed, and replaced in the same spot by the present much larger structure, was first erected. In the old Theatre the great performers of their day have all appeared, not with the frequency and convenience of present times, but always welcome.

Mr. Atkins was manager in 1802, when Mrs. Siddons again entered on a professional engagement of eight nights at our Theatre. The prices were raised on this occasion, free places were prohibited, and the excitement was extreme. The great actress was accompanied on this occasion by a youthful coadjutor, afterwards a universal favourite of the town. This was Mr. Montague Talbot, whose first appearance in Belfast was at this time, and who acted with Mrs. Siddons in some of her grand impersonations. He created among the Belfast critics and the general public a most favourable impression, and for some years after was known as a star or leading actor in the town, accompanying stars perhaps of still greater magnitude in their occasional visits.

The management of the Theatre passed soon after to Mr. Bellamy, who, after conducting it with credit for a few years, sold it in 1809 to Mr. Talbot, who announced his purchase of the Belfast, Newry, and Derry Theatres, and his permanent management of them all. Mr. Talbot's biography has appeared in several journals of late years. He attended the banquet which was given in Belfast on the coming of age of the present Marquis of Donegall in 1818, and recited a poem of his own composition on the occasion. It is not generally known to most people that Mr. Talbot was a man of much family distinction—descended, in fact, directly from persons of lordly rank—and had immediate relatives of very high position. Many attempts were made to wean him from the stage, but his passion for the histrionic art, in which he delighted, and in which he excelled, overcame all worldly and prudential considerations. He settled down as owner and manager of the three theatres, married the beautiful Miss Bindon, and resided in Arthur Street in this town. We have often seen Mr. Talbot both on



and off the stage. When Mr. Knowles had his school in Crown Entry, he sometimes called to pay a visit to his old fellow-actor. The boys of the school looked with awe and wonder at his dark complexion, his large lustrous eyes, his tall, lithe figure, and his braided frock-coat. Talbot would sometimes lift the cane, and assuming, as schoolmaster, such a look as he was capable of, would rap the table with it, and call out, "Silence!" But it would seem to have been unavailing. The remembrance of his genteel comedy characters would steal across his features, and he would relinquish the *rôle* as if in despair.

Will it be believed that this man, so clever, so special a favourite in Belfast, who had passed his life among the garish lights, among the brilliant scenes of the theatrical world, now lies buried in an obscure grave in Friar's Bush? No memorial, no stone of any kind, marks the spot where Talbot lies; the green sod alone covers his remains. We had often heard of this, but it was denied by some, who said he had died in Limerick; by others it was received with incredulity; but, being determined to ascertain the fact, if true, we entered into communication with the superintendent of the Old Graveyard of Friar's Bush. He affirmed that it was absolutely true, and said he would give us a copy of the entry from the registry. He failed in finding the entry, but, notwithstanding, reiterated the statement. The sexton said the same, and showed the place where Mr. Talbot was interred. It is a small grassy spot close to the wall, undistinguished, as has been already said, by any distinctive mark whatever; and this circumstance of itself makes the case remarkable, as there are handsome railed enclosures close by. These observations may possibly meet the eye of some person yet living who can prove the fact, if true.

Other incidental accounts of the Theatre, and of certain play-going individuals, occur in the first volume of this work, and in the general history of the period, as it was found difficult to include anything regarding it in this summary.

Many of the old customs in small matters have faded away. Fifty years ago, the Cave Hill sports on Easter

Monday were in full vigour. The Christmas rhymers or mummers followed their sports with equally strict observance. Now-a-days the latter is kept up in a feeble way in the suburbs of the town, but we are not aware that it is so in the town itself. Oliver Cromwell and his copper nose—whose history and ludicrous adventures were all printed in a little book, and may still be so, printers and performers being alike ignorant of the persons and events they endeavoured to commemorate—are among the amusing performances of a past age. Then, again, the bakers in their generosity sent a Christmas present to each of their good customers—a large loaf, plentifully stuffed with currants—and other tradesmen followed a like custom. Now it is abandoned, as the town has got too large for such customs. But everything is changed as well as these, and with regard to these a reverse has taken place—the servants who deliver their masters' goods to us now expect the gratuities, and our houses are besieged at Christmas by their looking for *douceurs* in money. The accent also of Belfast has much altered within 50 or 60 years. This was to be expected, so many of the young people of means being educated in England or the Continent.

THE POLITICAL CONDITION of the town was in those years utterly dead. It had been so long before, and in the same state continued for many years after. The Marquis of Donegall returned the parliamentary members for the town, generally some relation or connection of his own. Such was the political power of the great town of Belfast for long years. It was said at one time that there were only five persons in existence who had any voting claim under the old charter. It was said also, by a more direct or pungent jest, that a person calling one day at the Castle office, and asking to see the Marquis, was told that he was just then engaged, and, on turning to go away, Dick Moore, the Serjeant, who was at the door, said it would be unnecessary, as his Lordship would be down in a few minutes, being only up stairs making a Member of Parliament. This was a popular pleasantry of the day, which we have often heard. It

was perhaps circulated to ridicule the mockery of representation. There were certainly no riots nor broken windows, no speeches, no chairing or general rejoicing; but neither was there any of that vigour or that independent thought which leads to constitutional vitality, and gives a free people that influence which they are entitled to command in the councils of the nation.

THE EDUCATIONAL CONDITION of this town was, it cannot be doubted, more favourable than any other in Ireland. It has been stated (Mr. Greer's MSS.) that, before the year 1800, Henry Joy M'Cracken gathered a number of the poor children of the town to give them gratuitous instruction in the old Market House; which, if correct, is a very pleasing feature in the life of Mr. M'Cracken. But the earliest recognised Free School we have been able to discover is that called the Union School, which was originated about 1800, and called the Union, it may be conjectured, on account of that political measure being then under consideration. This was the earliest of our free schools for the poor. In 1800, sermons were preached in favour of the Union School, the little fund for the support of which was exhausted. This was in the middle of the famine, and the poor children, forty in number, were supported as well as instructed. Yet even in this poor way it did not go on smoothly, as the words "malevolence and rancour" are used in opposition to it by some, and it was perhaps used as the vehicle of a religious party. In 1802, however, a better school was established, under the title of the Belfast Weekly or Sunday School, by a few young men. In it young persons were taught the elements of knowledge. This was a Sunday school, only, as the description of it states, that the persons taught were employed through the week at their ordinary occupations. An odd circumstance regarding this school was, that the young persons then attending were instructed in writing and arithmetic on Sundays. There were 120 pupils, and the report of its proceedings is favourable and satisfactory. We have not ascertained where it was situated. No such thing as a free daily school appears to have been yet contemplated. The managers further

stated that they intended to call on the inhabitants for subscriptions to build a more suitable School House. They did so, when a grumbler appeared, and wrote of the school, and the boys that should have been attending it, in an exceedingly vituperative manner, asserting that there was not in Belfast, in the year 1802, a single school for the gratuitous education of the poor, and that the inhabitants had no appreciation whatever of the inestimable value and importance of such an institution. He further describes where such a school had once been in a lane off Waring Street; on paying a visit to it one Sunday morning, he found it neglected, and saw approaching him a crowd of ragged, noisy boys, evidently coming from the shore, and carrying with them game cocks, which bore the marks of conflict, and which they had been fighting on the Sabbath day.

In spite of this language, the young men who had begun this school seem to have persevered, and the fund which they then raised formed the beginning of that which, several years after, was sufficient to commence the Frederick Street School, the ground for which was given by the Marquis with his customary kindness and liberality, and which ultimately became the famous Lancasterian School of Belfast.

A small difficulty occurred at a later period respecting the introduction into this town of the Lancasterian system. Joseph Lancaster, the founder, was a member of the Society of Friends, and knew nothing of the religion of those taught under his system. This, which was in his eyes its great merit, was what we now call a purely non-sectarian system, and on that account was objected to by some persons in Belfast. The objection was got over in due time.

But the same person, who affirmed that the lower classes in the town were not receiving any education whatever, carried his condemnation to the better classes also, and declared that, considering the population that there was then, there were only one thousand boys in all the schools in town receiving their education, of whom only one hundred were learning classics, of which number not more than one-fifth would ever go further than to be

able to read a physician's prescription in an apothecary's shop. He further averred, in opposition to another educational inquirer, who declared that the ladies of the town were highly educated, were well acquainted with French and Italian, and accomplished painters, that they knew no more about the two languages named than they did about Greek or Hebrew, and that, though a few might be able to copy a water-colour painting in an imperfect manner, they had no real accomplishments, nor any solid education, nor any means for acquiring such. This controversy regarding the educational defects of all classes was continued for a long time.

This is all, we doubt not, very incorrect, and is merely the reckless assertions of a person who only endeavoured to prove his case by exaggerated language. This person has most probably over-estimated the gross number of pupils in all the schools of Belfast when he says they amounted to one thousand in number, but has under-estimated the amount of those who were proceeding to a high-class education when he says there were only one hundred. There were many excellent schools in Belfast, and we have stated, in a former chapter, the names of the principals. The Academy alone had more than one hundred pupils learning classics. An opponent takes up the question, and perhaps wanders a little too far on the other side. He says that "a greater number of youths are engaged in the study of classics in this year (1805) than at any former period of our history. We want," he says, "only a university to raise us to a distinguished rank in the republic of letters, and that without going beyond the precincts of our own town we could supply, in every department of science, professors that would not be a disgrace to the first university in Europe." These squabbles prove the desire for what one of the above writers calls, with so elevated a title, a university.

As we are now writing about education, we may as well place here some information we have obtained respecting the doings in schools which, though within the era of this great educational controversy, are still within living memory. They

come from a very old friend, and are here given in his own words:—

“When about nine years of age, I was a pupil at the Belfast Academy, when Mr. Goyer was the English master, Mr. T—— the writing master, and Mr. D—— the arithmetical master. Of Mr. Goyer I remember little, except that he was particularly good at administering what were then called *pandies*—that is, a punishment by striking the boys on the open hand with a cane, a most objectionable kind of correction, and likely to inflict lasting injury on the hand. The cane was, in those days, an established institution. None of the departments I have named were without it, and in some of them it was in daily, almost hourly requisition. Looking back to those distant times, I now see that the system of education was not good. Punishment was the ruling principle, and the system of imparting knowledge to the young was not as well understood as by David Manson, the schoolmaster of half-a-century earlier. His plan had been to make it pleasurable, to abstain from personal chastisement, and to amuse the infant and youthful mind when instruction was being imparted, and to drive terror far away.

“Mr. T—— was a singular example of a writing master. He wrote with the left hand, on which he had only the thumb and two fingers. The right hand was even more distorted. Whether born this way, or that it was the result of some accident in childhood, I could never learn. He was a man devoted to his calling—indeed very fond of it. His whole day was spent bending over his desk, mending and making pens, for there were no steel pens at the time, and the preparation of quills for the purpose was quite a serious undertaking. He seldom rose from that seat except at the end of the hour. Taking the cane up, he came to the end of each desk, and the boys advanced in rotation with their copy-books to show what they had been doing, or how they were proceeding with their writing, when he administered to those who, in his opinion, deserved it, a lashing, and that was to a very considerable part of the entire number.



He had habituated himself, when sitting at his desk, to a very extraordinary rhyme, which seemed to me ceaseless. Without looking up from his *pen-making*, or raising his eyes, he was constantly saying—‘You there, clubbing in that corner—yet you will, I’ll lash you, sir; I’ll lash you like a hound, beat you like a stockfish; I’ll scringe your back and shoulders, sir, till they glow like the rising sun; you there, I’ll smite you hip and thigh, you caitiffs,’ and some other threatening and original expletives which I now forget. How he invented these extraordinary phrases is beyond my power to guess. They passed over the boys as the idle wind, which they heeded not. Yet Mr. T—— was an excellent writing master, and the principal teacher in the town.

“Mr. D——, the arithmetical teacher, was a dry and cynical character. His school just adjoined the writing-room, which had to be passed through in its whole length before the former could be entered. The door which communicated between them had been pierced by a pistol bullet about twenty years before, as the tradition went, in a turn-out or rebellion of a number of the boys claiming some rights, and who had taken possession of, and held for a time, the arithmetical school-room. The two schools, therefore, closely adjoined, and no schools could possibly have been more dissimilar. Mr. D—— possessed the power of producing and maintaining absolute quietness in his room, and the only means by which the noise from the writing school could enter it was by the small perforation in the door, through which, insignificant as it was, the tumult from Mr. T——’s school, which was anything but ‘angels’ whispers,’ found its way. To prevent this, Mr. D—— always had a supply of corks to close the orifice, and I have often seen him stuffing one in, and it was a usual practice with the mischievous boys to push it out again after the master’s departure to his little house in Rosemary Street. I must have been a considerable time with Mr. D——, but I scarcely remember that he ever spoke to me but once, when he called me up to his desk to show my copy-book. I went up to him in a trembling state.

He looked at me for a minute or two, and the first question he asked was, Did I like licorice ball? I, not daring to express my preference for barley sugar, remained silent, when he produced about an inch and a-half of fine big licorice, handed it to me, looked for a little at my copy-book, sent me again to my seat, saying I had been doing very well—a fact, if it were a fact, of which I was utterly unconscious.

“It was the practice in winter in those times for all the pupils to assemble at the Church railings, and if there was snow on the ground, to pelt every passenger who was walking along on the other side of the street, much of which being then only blank walls, so far favoured their operations. One morning a passenger thus assailed became irritated, and selecting a big boy as his chief assailant, followed him with the crowd—the 10 o'clock bell having rung in the meantime—into the yard, up the stairs, through the writing room.

“The boy he had been following turned upon him, and striking with his ruler at his umbrella, tore it from top to bottom. On arriving in the schoolroom, broken umbrella in hand, he told his story to Mr. D——, who had just arrived. D—— heard him with the greatest gravity, and then said—‘He tore only your umbrella! it is very well he did not tear yourself—it would not be easy for you to manage that boy out of doors when I can’t manage him indoors;’ and, so far as I know, afforded him no redress—he probably admired the boy for being so chivalrous as to turn his ruler into a sword, and do battle with it. A few mornings after, when Mr. D—— was combing his wig, with his back to the fire, he called out, ‘I don’t see Jackson among you this morning; what’s become of Jackson?’ A squeaking voice called out—‘Sir, he said he was not coming back.’ ‘Oh,’ said the master, ‘we’re like Bonaparte now, our best friends are deserting us.’ But the most overt act of open contumacy I ever witnessed was one fine summer day, when the school, as usual, was profoundly quiet, Mr. D—— sitting at his desk contemplating his subjects with apparent complacency. He looked for some time at a boy who was not working diligently; at last

he said to him in the hearing of all in the room—‘ Well, Quin, you’re a *quare*-looking fellow.’ The immediate rejoinder from the boy so addressed, equally audible to myself and all other boys in the room, was, ‘ I may as well go home as sit here ;’ on which Mr. D——, seizing the cane, rushed at him. Quin probably thought that flight in this case was the better part of valour, and in the sight of these warlike demonstrations, though he sat near the door, he thought he would not have time to escape by that passage through the next schoolroom and so out to the street, and therefore he ran up the room, pursued by Mr. D——, and the sight of the two running round the desks and over them was a spectacle not soon to be forgotten. Mr. D—— was weighted that day by his top-boots, for I know the impression of one of them was on my copy-book, beside the overturned ink-bottle; but he finally conquered, and the audacious culprit who had bearded him felt, I imagine, the weight of his paws that day; it was the last day he spent with Mr. D——. Yet, with all his eccentricities, Mr. D—— was an intelligent man, and, I believe, a competent teacher, as teaching then went. He left all his little gatherings to the Old Poor House, and the D—— bequest is still heard of in the accounts of that institution.

“ Soon after, I went to what was then the most popular school in the town, that of Mr. James Sheridan Knowles. This was in 1812 or 1813. It was at this time in Crown Entry, and was attended by a very large number of boys. Mr. Knowles succeeded better as an elocutionist than in the more minute details of teaching, in which his judgment does not seem to have been very great. I had been there some time, when Mr. Knowles said that he was not satisfied with the essays written at home by his pupils, and that he believed assistance was rendered to the supposed writers. He therefore announced that, on a certain day, he would assemble a number of his more advanced scholars in an upper room in his house, and cause them to compose an essay unassisted. When so assembled, he ordered them to proceed with their composition on the ‘ Nature

of Virtue'—a very proper subject for the pen of Dr. Samuel Johnson, but rather inappropriate for a number of young school-boys. After locking them up in the room, he left them to compose essays on this very comprehensive subject, all the requisites of pen, ink, and paper being provided for them. The results were what might have been expected. The boys began to play tricks instead of writing, and in a short time Mr. Knowles, I suppose hearing the commotion, walked into the room, and, after lecturing them a while, said he supposed they wanted some refreshment; he thereupon went down and sent them up a shilling loaf and a number of crabs, with the nature of which the boys soon made themselves acquainted. The noise and idleness increased rather than diminished, upon which Mr. Knowles came up again and dismissed them, not a word of the essay having been written by one of them. Mr. Knowles also had a cane which he used occasionally, but not often. He invented a substitute, which I have seen practised in his school in Hammond's Court. The ceiling of the room was so low that it could nearly be reached by the hand, and was therefore very well adapted for a mode of punishment which he practised upon refractory boys. He drove into the woodwork of the ceiling a number of hooks, such as may be seen in country houses for hanging bacon. To each of these he attached a strong cord with a loop at the end. The cord was above the floor about a foot and a-half. Into the loop at the end he caused delinquents to insert one of their feet, thus obliging them to stand on the other. Three or four boys might be seen standing at the same time on the floor in this novel position. It was amusing to see boys standing in this manner, hopping about when tired, or changing their position from time to time to get some ease or relief. We do not think this practice continued very long, for Mr. Knowles was at all times most genial and companionable with his pupils. But let the teachers of the present day think of the mode of instruction and the mode of punishment here detailed, and let the pupils reflect on the happy change that has been effected, to their advantage, by enlightened men of recent times."

It was in 1806 that the first intimation of the Academical Institution was made. On the 3rd of June in this year, at a meeting of the friends of the intended Institution, several resolutions of a general nature were passed, in which they say that the extending commerce and increasing population of Belfast render a high-class school expedient and necessary. The general outline only is stated. The object is said to have been first mentioned or advocated by the unfortunate Thomas Russell, in the preceding century, and now in 1806 it was brought to an issue by a few Belfast merchants. These merchants in their resolutions speak with truth and with a proper pride of the public spirit of the town, and the readiness of its inhabitants to give support to an institution such as was briefly shadowed forth; and it is worthy of note that the projected seminary, which it was intended should be superior in its aims to any educational establishment then in the town or country, was designed to make provision for the instruction of the youth of both sexes, perhaps one of the earliest aspirations known for the higher education of women. This meeting seems to have been composed entirely of the mercantile class in the town; Mr. Samuel Gibson, who was uncle of the late James Gibson, Esq., Q.C., being called to the chair.

No further movement took place till the 22nd September, 1807, when, at a meeting in the Exchange Rooms on that day, the friends of the intended Institution agreed to a Report prepared by a Committee for its general management. This report was printed, and a copy is still among the old Records of the Institution. A Treasurer and a Secretary were appointed, and a committee of twenty-two chosen, almost entirely out of the mercantile class, to collect subscriptions. They presented a very satisfactory report on the 29th October following, which excited a newspaper comment in these words:—"Our Exchange yesterday exhibited a scene unexampled in the annals of this town, which must reflect the greatest honour on all parties concerned. The subscription for the new Academical Institution commenced at one o'clock, and before three £3,014



were collected. It must be observed that this was not the united contribution of the inhabitants, but the voluntary offering of twenty individuals, who are the only persons yet called upon. Their example will no doubt be followed with equal spirit, and we may now look forward to the erection of a seminary which will far surpass the first expectations of its warmest advocates." Their hopes were not disappointed, and on the 16th of October they report:—"The unprecedented success which has attended the subscriptions for the new Academical Institution, gives us reason to hope that it will speedily be brought to such a state of forwardness as to remove every doubt of its final and complete accomplishment. The subscription has been but four days opened, and the sum of £5,728 is already collected. The contributions are in proportion not so much to the ability as the public spirit of the subscribers, and present private interest appears forgotten in the prospect of future public advantage. What consequences may not result from such a unanimous operation? We do not wish to indulge in a fanciful expectation, yet the present occasion authorises us to cherish a well-grounded hope that, instead of sending our youth to procure the necessary qualifications for a learned profession in foreign universities, a seminary is now about to be raised among ourselves which will revive the ancient spirit of learning, that this town may be a centre from which the lessons of science may emanate, not only illuminating the scholar and speculative philosopher, but enlightening the husbandman, the manufacturer, and the artisan, and guiding their steps to new discoveries and improvements in every path of useful knowledge."

These congratulations were not without reason. There had not been, up to this time, so great a project so unanimously accepted. Noblemen, bishops, and large landed proprietors united with Belfast merchants in supporting the undertaking. At a great meeting of the promoters of the Institution, on the 15th February, 1808, the Committee report most favourably on the active support and the promises of future assistance which they had received from the most influential persons in the country



and from the Government. They report the subscriptions now have reached £14,581. The ultimate amount, it may be here stated, was £16,056, and the names of all the subscribers, with the sums paid by each of them, still remain in the Manager's Books, a standing record of Belfast enterprise and general liberality. This sum required to be largely supplemented from private sources in order to maintain the Institution in an efficient state, and therefore the Managers, from time to time until the present, have been obliged to appeal to the friends of liberal non-sectarian education to aid them with pecuniary assistance, in order that the needful repairs, apparatus, and additional buildings may be provided to meet the requirements of the present age. In 1825, the subscriptions and bequests in the gross amounted to £24,454 3s. 8d., according to a return made to the Government, and large sums were contributed between that date and the restoration of the Government grant of £1,500 per annum. Within the last twenty years, so numerous have been the improvements effected, that several thousands must have been contributed to the funds of the school. We estimate the entire expenditure on this corporation at a sum not much under £40,000. The first meeting connected with the Institution took place in 1806, as has been already noticed. It had already been drawn to the notice of the Marquis of Donegall by letter, and by a deputation. The letter is in the Manager's Books, declaring the objects of the Institution, and seeking his countenance and patronage of it. This letter is signed by more than one hundred and sixty persons, and states that, in accordance with their design, as they had detailed to his Lordship when they had waited on him in the previous month of June, they had now made choice of a piece of ground which, if approved of by him, they would consider suitable for the intended seminary of learning. They say—"We enclose, for your Lordship's inspection, a sketch of the lot we have selected, and we beg leave to mention that, although we do not at present apply for a lease, we would like to have it in our power to inform those persons

we may apply to for subscriptions that our choice has been approved of. When thus authorised, we intend immediately to solicit subscriptions; and from the inconvenient situation in which many inhabitants of Belfast have been hitherto placed with regard to education, we have reason to believe that a sum will be raised adequate not only to erect a useful and ornamental building, but to establish an Institution extremely beneficial to your Lordship's populous and rising town, and deserving your protection and patronage, and we are not without hope of obtaining a share of the sum voted by Government for the introduction of useful learning into the kingdom."

The Marquis was at the time in London, but his answer, addressed to Mr. Edward May, Junr., as chairman of the body, gives him a discretionary power to accede, and expresses a warm interest in favour of the projected Institution; alluding, at the same time, to some difference of opinion which appeared among its promoters, and advising unanimity of action and sentiment.

In a short time the ground was granted, and the Act of Incorporation subsequently obtained; but so slow were building operations at that period, chiefly arising, in this case, from the dearness of timber and the difficulty of obtaining it at any price, that seven years elapsed before the Institution was ready for occupation. This delay was found so prejudicial to the general interest of the Institution, that the opening of the classes in temporary buildings was advocated, but that project never took effect. In the meantime the ground was, as it had long been, unoccupied—waiting, like other waste fields around the town, for the architect and builder—when the Managers gave notice that they had appointed a watchman, empowered to impound all cattle found trespassing on the Institution grounds. The place chosen was in a very favourable situation. It contains nearly eight statute acres, and is now, irrespective of the buildings upon it, of great value. It was at one time covered by the sea, and the building, not having been piled,

has to all appearance sunk very considerably within our memory.

The notices of the Managers for a million bricks, for contractors to build, for subscribers to pay their subscriptions into the discount office in gold, there being no bank in the town at the time, and for various other matters connected with the early history of the Institution, were frequent. The foundation-stone of the intended great seminary was laid in July, 1810. A number of those who were its zealous promoters assembled at the Exchange Rooms, and walked to the ground. The stone was laid in what was then almost a waste and desolate spot, unattended with any form or ceremony. The formal opening of the Institution took place on the 1st of February, 1814, in the presence of a very large assemblage. Dr. Drennan was the principal speaker, and addressed the audience with his accustomed eloquence and power.

The School classes assembled a short time after under Mr. O'Beirne, who had been appointed the first classical teacher, and also under Mr. James Sheridan Knowles. The school of Mr. Knowles had been for some time in the entry leading from Corn Market to the Castle Market, which now exists in that place, and which had been, in ancient days, the principal entrance to the Castle. The schoolroom was entered by a narrow, steep staircase to the left, till a long attic was reached, partly lighted from the ceiling; and from that room he walked, at the head of his boys, to do his part in the opening of the Institution. The writer was one of that youthful band of which there are so few now remaining. The grounds, the building, and all the surroundings which the boys beheld in March, 1814, were dreary looking. The ground was wet and swampy; there was no iron railing at the entrance—no Victoria Street nor College Square—no Meeting House nor Church, but grassy land on all sides, and numerous dead walls in blocks of streets, which had received names, and were partially occupied. We were installed in one of the rooms, and began such lessons as we had recently been learning in the last

place in which Mr. Knowles had held his school. A few days after, Mr. James Thomson, from Ballynahinch, walked into the room. He had been appointed teacher of Mathematics, Arithmetic, and Geography. He was then a young man of twenty-four years of age, rather country-like in his appearance. As is well known, his talents and sagacity were of a high order. He was father of the two eminent professors, Sir William Thomson and his brother James (both now in Glasgow University). His school was opened a few days after. The head English master who was first appointed was Mr. James Knowles, father of James Sheridan Knowles; and there is a letter in the Manager's Book of 1814 from the latter, stating that his father would leave England, in the second week of April, to take on him the duties of that office. Two years after, the College Classes were commenced. Three very competent Scotch professors were obtained, and a collegiate system of education was originated, similar, so far as practicable in a new and unfinished establishment, in its details and general economy, to the University of Glasgow. The Government made a grant for their support, which, after a few years, was for a time suspended on what would appear now as very insufficient grounds. The insufficient grounds, and the details of the temporary suspension of the Government allowance, are as under.

On Saturday, the 16th March, 1816, a dinner was given in Belfast, at which about fifty gentlemen attended, three of them managers, two of them visitors, three of them teachers of the Institution. Toasts were proposed, and speeches made, which gave great offence to the Government.

Rt. Hon. V. Fitzgerald, by letter of 22nd April, 1816, to the Managers, informed them that he would not move for a grant of money for the Institution in that session for the following year.

On the 2nd May, 1816, the Managers wrote on the subject to the Right Hon. Vesey Fitzgerald, explaining the whole matter, condemning in the strongest language the conduct of those implicated, and repudiating the views expressed in the after-dinner orations (see *Belfast Commercial Chronicle*).

The grant of £1,500 was held in 1814, 1815, and 1816. The Parliamentary grant for 1816 was paid on 13th January, 1817.

The grant of £1,500 was restored in the session of 1828, and the first payment was made on the 27th February, 1829.

The Earl of Belfast wrote to the Secretary of the Institution on the 11th November, 1831, that His Majesty William IV. had become patron of the Institution, and that henceforth the title "Royal" might be used in its designation.

Thus the two objects of the Institution originally contemplated by its projectors were realised—a great school, or rather schools, for elementary instruction, and a college to teach the higher branches of education. In the latter, the candidates for the ministry in the Presbyterian Church generally received their education for more than thirty years, or till the opening of the Queen's College, when it of course ceased, and the Institution became a great school for boys, which it still is, and is as well attended and supported, and as much favoured and esteemed, as at any period of its existence. Even a brief summary of the names of its most distinguished pupils, and the positions attained by them, would be an interesting history for the information of the youths who now attend its classes; but this it is beyond our power to supply. We cannot, however, refrain from noting specially the unprecedented and unparalleled success of two of its recent pupils, who received their early training within its walls. We should premise that these two young gentlemen were members of our community, brought up amongst us under very different circumstances, the one being son of W. J. C. Allen, Esq., J.P., Director of the Ulster Bank, and the other the son of the late Mr. Larmor, one of our worthy citizens in very humble circumstances. In due course these young gentlemen proceeded to Cambridge University, after graduating at the Queen's University in Ireland, and in the years 1879 and 1880 they each gained the much-coveted distinction of Senior Wrangler in that ancient university. Mr. Andrew James Campbell Allen and Mr. Joseph Larmor carried off numerous prizes and valuable

exhibitions during their entire school and college career, and we hope both have before them a bright and happy future.

Having had the privilege of access to the old Books of the Managers, and knowing the Institution from its very infancy, a narrative of far greater length, and possibly of much interest to many, could be given; but aiming only at a popular account of most matters coming under notice, it would be impracticable to extend the details beyond their present length. The Institution has passed through some vicissitudes and dissensions during its existence—has been assailed by enemies, but has always come out scathless. It has, unfortunately, no endowment. Its affairs have been chiefly managed of late years by those who have been educated within its walls, and it is not too much to say that the principle of non-sectarian education, so creditable to its founders—the principle on which, subsequently, the National Schools of Ireland and the Queen's Colleges were founded, so just in itself—has never been infringed in the Academical Institution from its first hour to the present day.

From its opening till the present time the principal departments of the school have been presided over by the following Head Masters:—

#### CLASSICAL DEPARTMENT.

Rev. A. O'Beirne,	.	from 1814	till 1818.
Dr. Neilson,	.	„ 1818	„ 1821.
Rev. Dr. Hincks,	.	„ 1821	„ 1836.
Mr. Hugh Wilson,	.	„ 1836	„ 1840.
Rev. Dr. M'Kay,	.	„ 1840	„ 1841.
Dr. Murphy,	.	„ 1841	„ 1848.
Dr. Moffet,	.	„ 1848	„ 1849.
Mr. Howe,	.	„ 1849	„ 1851.
Mr. Evans,	.	„ 1851	„ 1856.
Dr. Steen,	.	„ 1856	—

#### MATHEMATICAL DEPARTMENT.

Dr. James Thomson,	.	from 1814	till 1832.
Rev. I. Steen,	.	„ 1832	„ 1869.
Mr. R. C. J. Nixon,	.	„ 1869	—



## ENGLISH DEPARTMENT.

Mr. James Knowles, .	from 1814 till 1817.
Dr. Montgomery, .	„ 1817 „ 1839.
Rev. W. Hamilton, .	„ 1839 „ 1845.
Dr. Blain, .	„ 1845 „ 1861.
Mr. John Carlisle, .	„ 1861 —

## WRITING DEPARTMENT.

Mr. Thomas Spence, .	from 1814 till 1843.
Mr. Patrick Johnson, .	„ 1843 „ 1863.
Mr. John H. Howell, .	„ 1863 —

## MODERN LANGUAGES DEPARTMENT.

The teachers in this department were numerous, and their periods of service often very brief. Many of the following will be remembered by former pupils:—Messrs. Lonselles, Bané, Ferris, Fabbrini, D'Oisy, Schweitzer, Besaucille, Forneri, Lamoile, Brassy, Badier, Boyle, and Wild. The present Head Master, Mr. Dods, was appointed in 1872.

## DRAWING DEPARTMENT.

Messrs. Fabbrini, Besaucille, and Molloy.

## NATURAL SCIENCE.

Dr. Henry Burden, appointed 1876.

## CHAPTER VII.

THE TOPOGRAPHIC CONDITION of Belfast from 1800 till 1810 may be partially understood, by those who have any knowledge of the place, from the small extracts we made under their proper dates in our introductory chapters, so that a very few subjects specially noticed may perhaps be sufficient in this department of our work.

Where the Commercial Buildings now stand, there were, in the year 1800, a row of low cottages, thatched with straw. This has been affirmed by respectable persons who saw them. They have even mentioned the names of those who lived, or had their places of business, in them; these were Thomas McCabe, Valentine Joyce, Russell, and others. There were thatched houses also in Donegall Street, not now remembered by any person living. A gentleman, now at a very advanced age, has informed us that he remembers several thatched houses in Corn Market; that one of these, a mean little shop with a clay floor, was given up by the tenant because the rent of £20 a-year was too great for the business transactions of the shop to afford. A house and shop on the same site have been recently let at £180 a-year. But the most remarkable notice on this head which has been found is that, so late as 1810, there was a thatched house in High Street, exactly where now stands the great hardware establishment of Messrs. Richard Patterson & Company. This has been told by a most respectable and trustworthy informant, who lived at the time on the opposite side of the street. It was a house of two stories, and was at the time used as the Blind Asylum of the town.

There are some thatched houses still in Belfast. There are,

or were lately, several in Frederick Street and Mill Street, and there must be some others in bye-lanes. A century, or a century and a-half ago, they were in all parts of Belfast. The Exchange itself was a brick building, with coarse barred iron gates and columns in the inner area. Such a condition of things in this locality at this period was rather remarkable, when we consider that the spot described was the very centre and heart of the town. Two houses higher up in Donegall Street cannot be overlooked without particular notice. The first which is reached is the Vicarage House, at the corner of Talbot Street, and abutting on the Churchyard. It has been converted into two shops. The other is above the Church, and was the private mansion of the head of the Belfast Academy, and from which Dr. Bruce had so often stepped into the then quiet street. It also has lately been devoted to trade, one end being now a shoemaker's shop, and the other ready for the occupation of a draper or a retail grocer. A little higher up, and on the same side, at the corner of York Street, there was long the residence of the respectable Stevenson family, and when built, must have stood nearly alone. It is now the Queen's Hotel.

There is no inhabitant of the town of middle age who does not remember the old venerable Long Bridge, for many years the wonderful sight of Belfast. Without side paths, a narrow roadway, it was long denounced as unfit for the traffic which was yearly increasing. Near it, at the end of Ann Street, was the house of the Turnley family, one of the oldest in the town. The block of which it formed a part was their property. North Street, reaching from the Belfast Bank to the foot of Peter's Hill, is one of the best streets of the old town. At the top of it there is a flagged footway where, in our early days, there was scarcely a footpath at all. It is every way improved during recent years. This street has been truly described as the nursing-ground of many of the merchants of the old days. They first tried their "prentice hands," generally as grocers, in North Street, by degrees becoming great merchants, shipowners, or bankers. Some of the old streets of Belfast have been improved ;

some have been obliterated altogether from the map of the town by recent changes. High Street, the first and greatest of our old streets, is now almost magnificent, and is all business premises. A native of Belfast, who had been born and brought up in one of the best streets which it contained, lately came over from America, after nearly a life-long absence, to visit the home of his youth. He could hardly find it. An immense place of business occupied its site, and he compared Belfast to an American town, so great was its progress in his absence, and so unexampled the growth of its population. Many inhabitants can relate similar experiences.

Castle Place, the continuation of High Street, was known in those years as the Grand Parade. Samuel Hyde, the Bishop of Down, and others of that class, resided in it. The Donegall Arms Inn was also in it, and likewise the favourite hotel of Mr. Patrick Linn, which stood where the present Lombard Street now is. Before this, Mr. Linn had his hotel in one of the two dark, miserable lanes which were cleared away, a few years since, to make way for the splendid buildings of Lombard Street. On leaving his former inn, he gave notice he would let it to a "genteel family," and that for such it would be most suitable, as he had removed his inn to the front street. This was in 1799. It was much frequented by travellers at the time, the Donegall Arms being the place where the Court-Martial was held, and where prisoners were occasionally confined.

Persons of the highest rank, lords and ladies, set out from the White Cross Inn, generally, to Donaghadee. "The Right Hon. John Foster and family have left the White Cross Inn for Dublin;" and it appears to have been, in those days at least, the principal inn of the town.

Smithfield is another place of note, topographically. We cannot ascertain the exact time when it was opened as a public market, but, from incidental notices, it was probably about the year 1780; it may have been then a grassy field. Previously to that time, all the markets, except the linen, were

held in High Street. In whatever year, however, Smithfield was opened, the Cattle Market at least was settled in it. The cattle, in the year 1806, and probably many years before, and certainly many years after, were confined by strong, coarse wooden railings; the pedlars' stalls were in rows on the east side, out of the range of the cattle. This was on the Friday only. On all other days of the week, Smithfield, which contains several acres, was an utterly miserable-looking and deserted place, though several of the public institutions of the town were in it, and some of the cotton mills partly in the square, or in the streets adjoining. Besides the cattle dealers and the pedlars, there was also in Smithfield the market for grain, which was sold at a covered shed in the centre of the square, where the brewers, distillers, and corn merchants attended to purchase the small quantity of grain with which our market was then supplied; this began in 1804. A dozen of these gave notice in that year, in pressing terms, to all farmers to bring their grain to the public market-house in Smithfield, where they will find purchasers who will pay for the same in gold.

Smithfield, though desolate and quiet on all days except on those here mentioned, became yearly more popular as the town increased. There were many public-houses in it, with emblematical signs, these houses, no doubt, depending chiefly on their custom during the market-day. Its situation, and the numerous streets leading into it, made it a place well adapted for amusement, either for the inhabitants, or for the showmen who often visited the town.

The only emblematical sign which we remember was one on the east side of the square; this was after 1806, but it was perhaps to be seen in that year also. The inscription was—

“Ye Gentlemen and Archers good,  
Come in, and drink with Robin Hood :  
If Robin Hood be dead and gone,  
Come in, and drink with Little John.”

The archers good were depicted, in Lincoln green, with bows and arrows, chasing the wild deer in sylvan scenery, and the

little John who invited the cattle drovers and idlers of Smithfield to come in and partake of his hospitality, "for a consideration," was a man above six feet high, and large in proportion.

The Marshalsea Prison, to confine the debtors who had been worsted in the Seneschal's Court, was likewise in Smithfield, and the iron bars which kept the prisoners in confinement are still to be seen in the room of a house on the north side of the square.

There was also in Smithfield the Hospital and Dispensary on the same side of the square, or rather in West Street, and the House of Industry, when it was established a few years after, on the south side. This square was really an important locality in the beginning of the century, and a very lively spot on Fridays.

In the ancient capitals of great old countries, many places are to be found almost sanctified by the memories of the past, which, in bygone centuries, royal and noble personages have found captivating to the senses, where they have lived and died, but which now, in the progress of time, have become common, mean, and dilapidated. No such associations surround any spots in Belfast. The site of the Castle alone can be named as likely to possess some of them, and Irish princes and English nobles have often sojourned within its stately halls; but from the time of its destruction by fire in 1708, no attempt was ever made to restore its ancient splendours.

Nine years after the burning of the Castle, the leasing of the ruined buildings, and the grounds belonging to them, commenced. The first lease was given in 1717, for forty-one years, to Mr. Ellis. This was the same person who had recently been Sovereign of the town, and whose history is related at some length in our first volume. The next lease was given to the Rev. Bernard Ward, and several others are named to whom leases were granted. From one of them what was called the "Barge Land or Yard" was exempted, being, it may be supposed, a portion of land granted by the Donegall family as wages, or



part wages, to the caretaker of the *Pleasure Boat* which lay in the water covering the ground where Arthur Street and the adjoining properties now stand. Mr. Thomas Greg received the greater number of leases, the first being in 1767, and several subsequently. Mr. Greg built his house on the ground where the old Castle stood, which was afterwards occupied by his son, Cunningham Greg.

We have been informed that one of the Messrs. Batt lived in Hammond's Court, in our own recollection a wretched lane, now a handsome flagged space. This was the entrance from Corn Market, though afterwards, or at the beginning of Mr. Greg's occupation, the entrance had been from Castle Lane. The gates and pillars were sold to Mr. John Sinclair, and the latter are at the entrance of the public park, Falls Road, the former being attached to a tenement adjoining. The ground, once so great and beautiful, is now (1880) a busy little market for the sale of fish, fowl, vegetables, meal, &c.

It would seem that the entire ground was not occupied in the manner above stated, but that a portion was reserved by the Lord of the soil for his own use, as there was built within the enclosure, for an occasional or temporary residence, the office of the land or law agent. It still stands there, though reduced in size, and no longer used for its original purpose. Fifty years ago, and even later, a high brick wall encompassed much of the Castle grounds. On the Donegall Place side it extended from the corner of Castle Place to the corner of Castle Lane, and some distance down that lane. The broad footway in Donegall Place was unflagged, and over the wall trees might have been seen protruding their branches from a garden or shrubbery within. At this day some of the finest shops in the town are there—probably the first shops ever constructed on the modern principle of light, lofty ceilings, and spaciousness—and the two finest jewellers' shops in the town are at the two corners. A little before this time, the remainder of the Castle enclosure, or a portion of it, had been converted into the public market by Mr. Montgomery, an attorney in the town. The Sovereign of that

day thereupon commenced law proceedings against the projector of the market, on the ground that it was an infringement on his chartered rights of market dues. Litigation ensued, but finally Mr. Montgomery was successful, on the ground, as we have understood, that the Castle, its enclosures, and appanages were expressly exempted in the charter from all town or market dues. The market is called, indifferently, Montgomery's Market or Castle Market. No greater contrast from its early purpose could be found in any ancient city in the world.

To come down to a less romantic history in this non-historic town, let us select the spot at the foot of Hercules Street, which, like many others, has undergone the changes of time. On that spot, in 1771, the house of Mr. Waddell Cunningham, one of the most eminent merchants of Belfast, then stood. It was attacked by the "Hearts of Steel" and burnt (see Vol. I., p. 611). After this event it was repaired or rebuilt by the owner, who resided in it till his death in 1797. It was not a house of much pretensions. What changes it underwent, if any, between that time and the sale of it, are unknown to us.

Mr. William Tennent and the other projectors of the Commercial Bank purchased the property from Mr. Douglas, the nephew and heir of Mr. Cunningham, with the view of establishing the Bank in that place. This was not done, but Mr. Tennent acquired the property, and built the magnificent house on it which will still be remembered. It had large gardens attached behind the house in Bank Lane. When Mr. Tennent died, the house passed to his nephew, Mr. Robert James Tennent, who, after occupying it for many years, finally sold it to the Committee of the Roman Catholic Institute. They afterwards disposed of a portion of the tenement to the Provincial Bank of Ireland, who built the present stately and substantial pile which now stands upon it, so that the project of 1808 is revived on a greater scale. Any slight errors of detail in these two narratives will be excused, as the facts are yet known to many old inhabitants.

The Market House is another building that has a history and

associations of its own. It was opposite the Castle of Lord Donegall—begun on the most limited scale early in the 17th century; improved in 1666; partly owned by Mr. George Macartney, and partly let by him to accommodate the corporate authorities—the full details on these points being related in the first volume of this work.

The history of the Market House, up till the year 1801, is thus well known. In that year it must have been in fair condition, as an accurate observer states that it had several arches next the streets, enclosing an inner area in which meal was sold. Shortly after, the site was granted by the Marquis of Donegall to the late Mr. Adam M'Clean, who proceeded to pull down the ancient structure. It was first seen by the writer in 1810 or 1811, when it appeared to him to be a hideous ruin, a blackened mass as if burned by fire. It must have been a great height, so large appeared the unconnected masses, though probably seeming greater to childish eyes than it was in reality. Mr. M'Clean, after its removal, built houses and shops, of no great size, which remained there for many years. The book-shop in High Street was occupied by Mr. William M'Comb, and most of the site is now covered by the great structure, offices, and warehouses of Messrs. Forster Green & Company.

Mr. Adam M'Clean obtained his lease in 1802. This lease is among the older ones described in the account of the Castle. The rent was only £10 per annum, and this single amount was caused by the expense the lessee was expected to incur by the removal of the great stones of which the building was composed. There is a ground plan of the Old Market House attached to this lease; it was only 34 feet in the front next High Street, but it extended backward in Corn Market 91 feet.

The copy of a lease may be here introduced, which will show the value of ground in that favoured locality at the beginning of the last century:—

“ Lease, dated 26th September, 1727. To James Foreman

of Belfast, Butcher—Grants a wast peece of Ground in Corne Market, containing in front 20 foot, and extending backward 25 foot to the Wall of the Old Barge Yard. Bounding on the North with the holding of the late Robert Tustip, on the South and West with a peece of wast ground, and on the East with the street leading from Corne Markitt to the Shambles. Term 41 years, from 29 of this September. Rent £1 3s. 4d., with 2 hens at Michaelmas.”

It is well worth noting as a topographical fact, though similar ones could be mentioned of all the swelling suburbs of the town, that not many years ago there was a large field immediately behind the Linen Hall, spreading in an unbroken expanse to the edge of the Blackstaff. This was called M’Clean’s field or fields, though we are not certain that ownership by Mr. Adam M’Clean extended over the whole space. But it is certain that the part adjoining the Malone Road, and in a line with the five very large houses in Donegall Square South, had a low brick wall enclosing the ground. In this wall was a turnstile to give admittance to the field, which was crossed by a footway to the Malone Road. In that field we have seen Dr. Thomson lecturing to his pupils, and instructing them practically in the art of levelling and surveying. The low wall mentioned ran for a considerable distance from the corner, and there a large Presbyterian Meeting-house now stands. The old ditch extended from the back of the Linen Hall to the old Dublin Bridge. It was a high unsightly dike, and hedge suitable for sheltering the birds of the air, and producing the wild fruits of the earth. The change here is entirely indescribable. Immense linen factories, warehouses, offices, Ulster Hall, &c., now cover this once vacant space.

TRADE AND MANUFACTURES OF BELFAST FROM 1800 TILL 1810.—The trade of all Ireland is given in a long article in the *News-Letter* of 2nd January, 1810, from which the following short extract is drawn :—

“Our National Exports, in 1806, amounted to about nine millions; in 1808, to twelve millions; our town Revenues, on an

average of 1796-97-98, were only £1,800,000. . . . . We think the year 1810 will present the same features of internal prosperity as those immediately preceding."

The article, though congratulatory, is rather complicated, and not very clear. If, however, we rightly comprehend the writer's meaning, he makes the value of the exports of all Ireland at this time twelve millions sterling. Now we wish to show what proportion of this sum the trade of Belfast represented. Taking the value of Exports only as the test, it would appear from this that Belfast possessed nearly one-sixth of the trade of all Ireland. The amount of our Imports and Exports is herewith annexed. The great preponderance of the Exports of Linen goods above any other article will not fail to be noticed.

#### FOREIGN IMPORTS OF BELFAST FOR THE YEAR 1809.

14,166 Bales Cotton Wool.		
881 Barrels of Rosin.		
2,349 Hhds., 634 Tierces, 596 Barrels, 152 Bags,		
86 Cases Sugar.		
665 Casks, 357 Bags Coffee.		
139 Pipes Teneriffe, 5 Pipes Lisbon.	}	WINES.
115 Pipes, 20 Hhds. Port.		
120 Quarter Casks Malaga.		
16 Pipes, 6 Hhds. Madeira.		
372 Pipes, 2 Hhds. Spanish Red Wine.		
5,857 Bales, 90 Casks Alicante Barilla.		
600 Tons	Sicily	do.
95 do.	Teneriffe	do.
330 do.	Sardinian	do.
4,290 Barrels Pot Ashes.		
485 do.	Dantzic	Ashes.
226 do.	Pearl	Ashes.
63 Bags	Ginger.	
257 Bags and 49 Casks	Pimento.	
186 Casks	Madder.	
80 Hhds., 220 Pipes	Geneva.	

484 Casks Smalts.
6,515 Chests Tea.
978½ Hhds. Tobacco.
311 Bales Miserable (Shell Cocoa).
40 Casks Cocoa.
2,950 Puncheons Rum.
2,621 Bundles Cane Reeds.
14,082 Bushels Bay Salt.
582 Casks Rice.
8,529 Casks, 3,995 Sacks Flax Seed.
952 Cases Liquorice Ball.
198 Pipes Brandy.
2,097 Bundles Flax.
439 do. Hemp.
440 Casks Tallow.
46 Casks Spirits of Turpentine.
449 Barrels Tar.
838 do. Turpentine.

## EXPORTS.

	Value of
1,017 Cwts. Lard, . . . .	£3,051
2,626 do. Oats, . . . .	1,313
3,555 do. Oatmeal, . . . .	3,199
4,047 Cow Hides, . . . .	8,094
1,427 Cwts. Linen Yarn, . . . .	21,405
1,317 do. Hams, . . . .	4,280
98 Tons Linen Rags, . . . .	4,550
26,312 Yards Sacking, . . . .	1,515
340 Tons Potatoes, . . . .	1,020
6,502 Boxes Soap, . . . .	13,004
1,286 do. Candles, . . . .	4,383
26,524 Yards Muslin, . . . .	2,652
154,434 do. Printed Calico, . . . .	10,293
66,501 do. White do., . . . .	3,047
13,827,522 Yards Linen, . . . .	1,910,909
Goods, . . . .	24,085



	Value of
3,690 Tierces } Beef, . . . . .	_____
10,414 Barrels }	
46,246 Firkins Butter, . . . . .	161,861
7,442 Bales } Bacon, . . . . .	{ 74,420
1,107 Hhds. }	{ 26,494
1,948 Kegs Tongues, . . . . .	3,409

Except the quantity and value of the Exports from Belfast, the above figures are not very clear, but are given exactly as expressed in the document from which they are drawn.

In 1809, and many years previously, there was much direct trade with the West Indies.

The largest ship we remember was the "Belfast," about 300 tons register, belonging to the firm of Montgomery, Staples, & Co. Half-a-dozen West Indiamen would be at the quay at this time discharging their cargoes of sugar, rum, and molasses. But the most direct commerce was with the United States, as it still is. At this time the trade was carried on chiefly in American ships, with officers and crews from that country, who, before 1812, celebrated the anniversary of their independence by marching through the streets of the town, afterwards dining together at the Donegall Arms, from one of the windows of which a huge American flag flung abroad its stars and stripes. The war of 1813 seems to have extinguished this trade, to arise again in another form.

Before 1809, the American ships, and large vessels from other countries, had to discharge their cargoes into lighters at Garmoyle, not being able to get up to the quay in the town.

All this would prove very considerable foreign trade in Belfast in 1809, the prohibitory commercial laws of Napoleon being considered.

The old Custom House, in which the official business of the port was conducted, is still to be seen, though converted long since into offices.

The Ballast Office, which ruled the maritime affairs, is gone. It stood somewhere near where the private residence attached

to the Northern Bank now is, perhaps not so far back, and having the mean little dock close in front of it. But it is not our design to enter into the minutiae of the commerce of those days. We rather seek for new points of interest, either then or a few years later. We have therefore to state that Steam Navigation, though unknown in 1809, was entered upon by the merchants of Belfast at a period as early as those of any maritime town in the empire. It was about 1819 when it first attracted notice here. Mr. George Langtry and several other Belfast merchants essayed it, but with feeble and uncertain efforts. Not one then believed it was ever destined for any purpose beyond affording a little assistance to river or coast progress.

We quote the following most curious passage in illustration of this, though of an earlier date, by a few years, than that which we fixed upon as the era of its introduction here. "An experiment for tracking vessels by means of a steamboat was made this year upon the Forth and Clyde Navigation in a very successful manner. The Steamboat took in tow the 'Active,' one of the largest vessels in the Navigation, burden 100 tons and upwards, and towed her with the greatest ease and safety at the rate of *three miles* an hour. The general use of the *contrivance* will undoubtedly be advantageous to the country, by greatly improving the mode and lessening the expense of tracking vessels upon Canals and inland navigation."

"Now look upon that picture and on this."

Judge Lawson, in his address to the Grand Jury in 1873, said—"I have often had occasion to express from this place the pleasure which I always feel in entering this great and populous town, and marking on every side the evidence of material wealth and prosperity; your factories and warehouses rival those of Glasgow; your quays and docks may stand comparison with the most flourishing ports in England; and lately, in Liverpool, my attention was directed to the ships built in this port, as the best of that noble fleet of ocean steamships which now cross the Atlantic with as

much regularity as the channel packets between Holyhead and Kingstown." What a contrast! The first reference is to a mere little canal matter, and the writer of the account of it seems to have thought of nothing beyond that—no idea of the huge iron steam-vessels that were, 70 years after, to navigate every ocean.

The following has been written, by a person well acquainted with the subject, respecting the early steam navigation of Belfast:—"The first Steamboat that ever appeared at our quays was the 'Rob Roy,' called so, we presume, from Scott's novel of that name. She came from Scotland, and excited in the town an excessive curiosity. This was in the year 1819. She plied between Belfast and Glasgow. Another was the 'Chieftain,' built by Mr. Richey in his ship-yard in Belfast, the engines for which were made in the Lagan Foundry. She was entirely, therefore, a Belfast steam-vessel. She was owned by Mr. George Langtry, and was a passenger boat between this town and Liverpool. This was in the year 1826. Many vessels also of this character were constructed and used by Belfast merchants in the interval between the appearance of the 'Rob Roy' and that of the 'Chieftain,' which would now be considered utterly clumsy and inefficient. The largest was the 'Erin,' which actually ventured to go to London from Belfast, and which really did so for two or three years, but was finally lost at the Isle of Man."

The following is a curious fact in connection with the above. It is not generally known, or is at least almost forgotten, that the first iron boat ever built in Belfast was in the year 1838, in the yard of the Lagan Foundry. It was literally a small boat, a mere cockle-shell compared with the great ocean steamers of iron now built in our great ship-yard.

In the year 1850, the Belfast Iron Works were commenced in Eliza Street by Messrs. Thos. A. Barnes & Co., and afterwards became the property of the Belfast Iron Company; it was, however, found impossible to contend against the cost of importing coal, and in a few years the iron manufacture was given up. But

the attempt had one result of importance, and that was the introduction of iron shipbuilding in Belfast, the yard on the Queen's Island having been in fact projected to use the product of the Iron Works; and although the last-named enterprise unfortunately failed, the shipbuilding business did not. In 1853, ground was taken on the Island by Robert Hickson and Co., and operations commenced by laying down the "Mary Stenhouse," a sailing ship of 1,289 tons register, which was launched in 1854. Messrs. Robert Hickson & Co. continued the business until the end of 1858, and during their career built four sailing ships, two screw steamers, and a tug, of the aggregate measurement of 6,707 tons. In 1859, both the iron shipbuilding yard and the wood shipbuilding establishments of the Belfast Shipbuilding Company, who occupied premises also on the Island, and had constructed three wooden ships of considerable tonnage, were acquired by Mr. E. J. Harland, who had been Messrs. Hickson's manager, and from that time progress and development were rapid. In 1861 Mr. Wolff became a partner, and the firm has since been known as that of Harland & Wolff, but the number of partners was, in 1874, increased by the accession of Mr. W. H. Wilson and Mr. W. J. Pirrie, both of whom had been pupils of the original firm. The progress will be best shown by the following figures:—In the five years ending with 1864, thirty vessels, measuring 30,276 tons, were constructed; in the five years following, the figures are, thirty-six vessels and 28,023 tons; in the next five years, seventeen vessels and 46,283 tons; and in the five years ending with 1879, forty-four vessels and 57,068 tons. In 1868 the gross tonnage includes H.M. screw gun-vessel "Lynx," and in 1878, H.M.S. "Hecla," a torpedo ship. In 1870 was launched the "Oceanic," the first of the famous "White Star Fleet," which may be said to have marked a new era in the history of Atlantic steam navigation.

Messrs. M'Ilwaine & Lewis commenced business at Abercorn Basin as engineers and boilermakers, but have since added iron shipbuilding to their business; and in 1879, a new ship-yard, on the Antrim side of the river, was commenced by Messrs.

Workman, Clarke, & Co.; the senior partners in both firms having been pupils of Messrs. Harland & Wolff. So that the reputation of Belfast for the excellence of its shipbuilding may be expected to be fully maintained, and the extent of the trade to be largely increased, and in all its branches extensively developed.

No more marked change in one branch of industry was ever exhibited, since people first began to assemble in communities, than that now noted; and there was even a further step announced last year (1879), when it was arranged that from Belfast, weekly, a great iron steamship would ply regularly to New York with the punctuality of a cross-channel steamer.

It would be contrary to our purpose to say a word respecting the magnitude now of the foreign commerce of Belfast. The linens and other manufactured goods penetrate to the very ends of the earth. It was far from being so in the comparatively petty little epoch from 1800 till 1810. Then, our harbour and docks were small and inconvenient; distant navigation not possible to be conducted with precision; the great inventions of modern days yet undiscovered; general trade cramped by many unwise laws and regulations now no more. Freedom is now alive in every department of commerce as well as politics.

Neither was Belfast wanting in an early appreciation of that other great invention which has transformed the whole civilised world, and the want of which, in the present day, would bring all matters to a standstill, and impede the further progress of society. We allude to the railway system, which in no part of the country, for regular and systematic traffic, is yet half-a-century old.

The writer of this left London for Liverpool on the top of a stage-coach in February, 1838. He saw the railway in progress, and near its completion, from the great metropolis to Birmingham, and from the latter place to Liverpool it was opened. In Belfast, the first railway was in operation in 1839. It was the Ulster, originally intended to go to Armagh, but for a length of time it could only make its way to Lisburn. By some mischance



the engine got off the line and sank in the clay, before it had proceeded many perches from the then paltry station in Great Victoria Street, the very first day of its opening, to the great dismay of Mr. Godwin, the engineer. This was soon rectified. In the meantime the earthwork beyond Lisburn was being proceeded with, but Lisburn was the limit of the traffic for a length of time. This was the second line in Ireland. It was a favourite project from the beginning; the shares were soon at a premium; and of the eighty persons who promoted the bill for the Ulster Railway, it is said that there is only one now living. It was rather ambitious to call it the Ulster line; but now, being united with others, it is under the title of the Great Northern Railway, and is, we believe, the greatest in Ireland. Extending from Belfast to Dublin, it has ramifications to almost every place promising to be available between those two important points.

The manufactures of the town from 1800 till 1810 were the spinning of cotton by machinery, the weaving by hand of linen and cotton, and the bleaching and preparing of linen. The cotton mills, small and great, were probably not less than twenty in number; a large one was on the Falls Road, above the present Townsend Street; and one in Francis Street, said to have been the oldest in the town, and occupying almost one side of that entire street. Both are still standing; the former is a linen-spinning mill now, the latter is in a ruinous condition. The mill of the Messrs. Lepper, which was the largest in the town, was scarcely in operation at this period, though it is impossible to say, as it was burnt in 1811. Besides these, there were still in operation some horse mills for spinning cotton, and advertisements for the sale of mills of both kinds are frequently to be met with.

We may possibly be in error in saying any horse mills for spinning cotton were in operation from 1800 till 1810. Good authorities declare that during that period they were all worked by steam, but it is certain that at the end of the previous century horse power was in use, and the circumference of the wheel is frequently stated in advertisements.



The preceding is from our own impressions, and may not be altogether correct in every particular. It is extremely difficult to ascertain with accuracy the truth of disputed statements, though so comparatively short a time has elapsed since the cotton mills were in operation. Contradictory statements are often made which we cannot reconcile. The following on this subject has been kindly communicated by Thomas M'Tear, Esq.

“At that time, Thomas and Andrew Mulholland had been established in Belfast as weavers of calico and manufacturers of muslin, and Mr. Hind was in the habit of selling the cotton yarn for Mr. Ferguson, Ballyclare. One day, when he called on them, they told him that they had decided on purchasing the cotton-spinning mill in Wine Tavern Street—then owned and worked by the firm of M'Cammon, Milford, & Bailey—which was then on sale, but that they would not close the purchase unless he (Mr. Hind) would leave Mr. Ferguson, and come to them as manager of the spinning mill. With the full consent of Mr. Ferguson this was arranged, and Thomas and Andrew Mulholland commenced cotton-spinning, continuing, at the same time, the manufacturing of muslin and calico. They, after some time, wished to try experiments in weaving by machinery, and for this purpose Mr. Hind took the building in Francis Street, which was then idle. Mr. Hind did not think it had been a cotton mill, but there was an appearance as if the engine and boiler had been used for some manufacture.

“They filled the loft with power looms, and this was the first factory of the kind in Belfast. Afterwards, Mr. Hind turned this mill into a manufactory of cotton machinery.

“Mr. Hind thinks the oldest cotton mill in Belfast was in Smithfield, and was owned and worked by one of the Joys; for in going to his present residence in Lodge Road, which had been occupied by Mr. Joy, he found books and papers in one of the rooms relating to the business of this mill.”

Steam Engines were yet very rare. It has been stated to us that there was one working a little mill in Cotton Court, of

which the beam was of wood, and that it was visited by many persons as a curiosity. This was about 1808. Let this have been so or not, it is a certain fact, as established by a newspaper advertisement, that about the same period the owners of a linen factory in the country give notice that their engine will be at work three days in the week, and will be open on those days for the inspection of the public.

We cannot leave this subject without making a passing allusion to the present great manufacture of the town, which has entirely supplanted the cotton, and has made the town a vast place. We allude, of course, to the spinning of linen yarn, and we are so far fortunate, that we are able to present our readers with the following history of its origin from one qualified to speak on that important subject, and who has kindly communicated the following facts regarding it, and interesting information, at the same time, about its early promoters. The writer is John Hind, Esq., The Lodge, Cliftonville.

“ You are quite correct in saying that the Messrs. Mulholland were the first to commence the Spinning of Flax by Machinery in Belfast. You are perhaps aware that the Messrs. Mulholland were proprietors of a large Cotton Mill in York Street, which was destroyed by fire in the summer of 1828. Before rebuilding the mill, the question was discussed whether it should be adapted for Spinning Cotton as before, or for Spinning Flax or Wool, and after giving the matter great consideration, and having collected much information on the subject, it was decided that as the English and Scotch competition in the Cotton-spinning business was so great, and as the Linen trade was the natural business of Ireland, it would be advisable in rebuilding the Mill to adapt it for the Spinning of Flax by machinery, which was accordingly done. At that time my father, who had been consulted by the Messrs. Mulholland, and who had assisted them in procuring the necessary information, entered into partnership with them, and took the management of the practical part of the business, which he conducted most

successfully, the mercantile department being chiefly managed by the Messrs. Mulholland. The success which attended this experiment soon led to a considerable extension of the business in Belfast, and the Durham Street Mill and Blackstaff Mill, in both of which the Messrs. Mulholland and my father were partners, were erected. About the same time, Messrs. James Boomer & Co. converted a part of their large Cotton-spinning Factory into a Flax-spinning Mill; several other mills were then also built and set to work, among others, Messrs. Charters & Co., Messrs. J. Murphy & Co., and Messrs. Forsythe & Co.; but I cannot now tell the respective dates at which they were built. I should tell you that, about the same time that Messrs. Mulholland and my father built York Street Mill, the Messrs. Murland also commenced Flax Spinning by machinery at Castlewellan, Co. Down, and I am not certain whether they or the Messrs. Mulholland can claim priority as Flax Spinners on the improved wet-spinning system; of course that could be ascertained if necessary. I believe, however, I am correct in saying that neither of these firms was the first to commence the wet-spinning system in this country, as I remember when a boy, before York Street Flax Mill was built, two Englishmen, Messrs. Armstrong and Cunliffe, started a small Flax-spinning Mill on the wet system, at a place not far from Larne. They worked it for some years, but I believe were not very successful, as they did not continue it. Among the early pioneers of Flax Spinning in this part of Ireland were the Messrs. Watt, who had a small mill in the neighbourhood of Ballyclare; I believe a member of their family, perhaps their father, had been in the Cotton-spinning business as a partner in the firm of Boomer & Watt of Belfast, one of the earliest Cotton-spinning firms in Belfast. I have some recollection, as a boy, of a Mr. Tithe, who either had, or was connected with, a Flax Mill somewhere near Broughshane, but whether it was on the old dry or the improved wet-spinning system, I cannot say—I suspect it was on the old system. The Messrs. Davison of Broughshane were, I believe, early in the field as Flax Spinners, and, if I am not mis-

taken, either succeeded the Mr. Tithe to whom I referred, or may for a time have carried on business in connection with him. I know that Flax Spinning on the dry system was carried on at several places in Ireland, anterior to the introduction of wet spinning; among others, by Messrs. Nicholson of Bessbrook, Newry, and Messrs. M'Kean of Keady.

"I think you have been misinformed as to the Messrs. Marshall of Leeds having been the patentees of the present wet-spinning system. These gentlemen may have introduced water into the spinning of flax, as there were two or three wet processes adopted. One of these was the application of a piece of thick woollen cloth placed in a small trough of water, and applied to one of the drawing rollers; this had the effect of laying the fibres of flax and making the yarn smoother, and no doubt that to some extent it softened the fibre, and made it draw more easily. But the present system of wet spinning was the invention of Mr. James Kay of Manchester, and I think that Flax Spinning on this system soon became very general after its introduction by Mr. Kay.

"There can be no doubt that a large quantity of Linen Yarns which were spun in England was sent to this country to be manufactured and bleached, as I think that, with the exception of some specialities; there was not much Linen manufactured in England; at the same time, it must be remembered that a large proportion of the Linen at that time made in Ireland was from hand-spun yarn.

"I think I may say that there is no question that the late Mr. Abraham Walker Craig was the first person who succeeded in weaving Linen by power in Belfast; he had many difficulties to contend with, but he worked most assiduously till he overcame them all, and made the weaving of Linen by power a complete success."

To the preceding we have only to add the two following notices, the date of which came within our own historic era, and are fully expressive of the anxiety to get rid of the old spinning-wheel.

“ June 21st, 1808.

“ To Spinners of Flax and Tow by Machinery.

“ John Procter, Flax and Tow Machine Maker, Leeds, desires to inform the people of this part of Ireland that he is now setting a Spinning Mill to work in Comber, where he will remain a few weeks, should any person wish to favour him with their orders. He flatters himself that he will give every satisfaction; if by letter, direct to James Procter, Flax and Tow Machine Maker, Comber, Co. Down.”

“ The Bishop of Derry, in 1810, assisted two ingenious young men who had invented original and ingenious machinery for spinning yarn, but no account is given of the nature of the machinery. The Bishop advanced £500, and great hopes were entertained of its success and usefulness. It failed, however, from some cause not expressed.”—*News-Letter*, 24th July, 1810.

These notices refer entirely to the dry and wet spinning of linen yarn. The former was the old plan, and was entirely ineffective. Many attempts were made to improve it, and we always imagined that the modern, or wet-spinning system, was protected by a patent. This was scarcely the case, as, soon after the commencement of the trade in Belfast by the Messrs. Mulholland, many other mills in this town and elsewhere immediately sprang up, so that the project was to the patentee useless. We believe Mr. Kay of Manchester was the patentee, or supposed patentee.

At our short epoch, also, the old Brown Linen Hall, in Donegall Street, was in full vigour; the cloth merchants standing on the raised platforms, which are still to be seen in that dreary yard, purchasing from the weavers their hand-woven webs. The number of cotton weavers in the town in 1806 was very great, while the linen weavers were extremely few; they, it may be inferred, generally resided in the country.

The following information respecting the present state of the great linen trade of Belfast has been obligingly communicated by Michael Andrews, Esq., the Secretary to the Flax Association.



Of course the printed Report contains ample and minute details, and an examination of the Report which has been prepared for the year 1879 will convey to the reader a more satisfactory state of the trade, as a very decided improvement may be said to date from the middle of that year, after several years of depression.

“FLAX SUPPLY ASSOCIATION,

“10, DONEGALL SQUARE W.,

“BELFAST, *2nd June*, 1879.

“There are, in Belfast and suburbs, twenty-eight spinning mills (flax), containing 537,860 spindles and 8,171 power looms. How many of these are in operation I could not say. Of the above, thirteen are Joint Stock Limited Companies, containing 297,886 spindles and 5,460 power looms; and fifteen are private companies, containing 239,974 spindles and 2,711 power looms; fourteen mills *only* spin yarns, and the other fourteen both spin and weave. In the aggregate, the largest concern in Belfast is the Ulster Spinning Co., Limited, which, in three mills, contains 64,944 spindles and 802 looms.

“The three largest single mills are the Belfast Flax Co., containing 31,368 spindles; the Linfield (belonging to the Ulster Spinning Co.), containing 31,000 spindles; and the York Street Spinning Co., containing 29,972 spindles. There is nothing ‘special’ about this company, except that it was floated as a ‘Limited’ before the American war, and consequently made a large sum of money, and was thereby enabled to accumulate a considerable Reserve Fund; and it is the only company now in the trade whose shares command a premium in the market.”

A few details of the present extent of the great linen trade of Belfast may appropriately be introduced here to close its history.

Number of Mills in town and vicinity, . . .	28
Of these are private Companies, . . .	15
Joint Stock do., . . .	13
Number of Spindles, . . .	537,860
„ Power Looms, . . .	8,171
„ Hands employed, . . .	35,064



The number of operatives is approximately reached by computing the number of hands required at each power loom and spinning frame.

The number in spinning and weaving does not nearly represent those engaged in the linen industry within the prescribed radius of the town and its vicinity. There are the hands employed in wrapping and preparing the goods for market, in making collars and cuffs, and in hemstitching handkerchiefs, &c.

It will be perceived the writer does not attempt to enter into a history of the many branches into which the cotton trade divided itself after leaving the spinning mills. Such could only be done by a person practically acquainted with it. He merely takes up a few leading or salient points. But it may be said, from many interesting and very valuable communications which have recently appeared in a Belfast paper, that the business connected with its after details was extremely extensive and important, both in 1810 and many subsequent years. There is only one cotton-spinning mill (Springfield) now in Belfast. It is probably the only one in Ireland. That mill so long known as belonging to the Messrs. Lepper, though it had passed into other hands, was burned to the ground in 1875.

In reference to this subject, we may further add that Belfast is the natural *habitat*, as we have elsewhere said, of the great linen trade, and it is possible that, if the present wave of prosperity now flowing over it (March, 1880) should continue for seven years, several additional flax mills may be built, but not one for cotton. Should this opinion prove untrue, it will be taken but as the forecast of one "whose wish is father to the thought," and passed over accordingly, as it is as difficult to predict the turns of trade as the shifting scenes in the political world.

Foundry work and glass-making, considered as manufactures, were also in operation during this period. The first named was advancing very steadily. There were also the vitriol works just beyond the Long Bridge, in the County Down, and probably works elsewhere. But the cotton and linen manufactures were

certainly the principal occupations of the people, and the special manufactures of the town.

The paper manufacture was still in the town. In 1803, Mr. Henry Joy advertises that he has removed his place of business to Pottinger's Entry, where paper of all kinds suitable for grocers, linen merchants, and others can be obtained. This was made at the old Paper Mill, moved by the tidal water, and well remembered by many of the inhabitants, though now not a vestige of it remains.

The only other water-wheel in the town, so far as we know, or as we can tell, was that of the old Manor Mill, which had existed, there is good evidence to show, since the days of Queen Elizabeth, and which, traditionally, ground the meal for the Parliamentary troops which so long occupied the town in the 17th century. It is yet in operation. There may be some wheels or sites higher up the river where tuck mills for dressing and thickening woollen cloth were in former years. No such establishments are now known.

Returning again to our small domestic history, which ended with the year 1810, we have to mention the Currency as having greatly impeded the smooth course of trade and manufacture. It was to a great extent, at the time, a metallic currency, consisting of guineas, half-guineas, and seven-shilling pieces of gold, and Spanish dollars, smooth shillings and sixpences in silver, to which were added, in 1805, the tenpenny and fivepenny tokens, not yet forgotten by old persons.

The tokens were found extremely convenient, and remained in circulation until the equalisation of the currency, about twenty years later. There were some pound notes of the Lurgan Bank passing, which, so long as the name of Mr. Brownlow could be read on their worn faces, were freely received. But gold was the chief and favourite medium, and in the market, prices varied considerably if the sellers of commodities accepted bank-notes instead of gold, the difference being not at all so great as in some of the critical days when the funds were at the lowest, and a golden guinea and a thirty-shilling note

esteemed as of equal value. The gold was hidden away, or, as the expression is, *buried*, by way of security; causing, in some districts of the country, great scarcity and inconvenience. In country places not far distant from Belfast, little card or paper tokens were in use for trifling sums, which were taken as cash if the Issuer appeared to be solvent, and paid by him when a number was collected. Then the question of British currency and Irish currency added to the complication, and many clever communications from correspondents appeared in the newspapers, pointing out the absurdities of the time. These have long since been abolished. Our trade difficulties now are of an entirely different complexion.

1805.—A long article on February 8th exposes the nature of the circulating medium of this day. "Dollars were much in circulation at 5s. 5d. each. In consequence of the quantity of Bank tokens sent to the country, the Government has discontinued the sending of them, which would cause great inconvenience, if it were not for the Dollars."

There were also Six Shilling Bank of Ireland Tokens.

The Merchants, Shipowners, Cotton Spinners, and Manufacturers who conducted the extensive trade and business of the town from 1800 till 1810, have all, in the course of nature, long since ceased to exist. We had copied the names of about thirty firms or individuals with the intention of publishing them, but, on second thoughts, considered that such would be but a twice-told tale. Forty years, even twenty years, in any great town or city, seem to be enough to make a revolution in its population. The columns of a newspaper make sad havoc with the men of the day. The fleeting show moves on without intermission. New names are constantly arising in every commercial community, to be replaced by others who know but little of those who have gone before them. Some of them, or rather their immediate descendants, have entered into the charmed circle of the landed gentry of the country. Many such cases have happened in Belfast in all stages of its history. Other cases, far greater in number, have inevitably gone

differently—have been beaten in the battle of commerce—a battle in which it is as hard to combat, and as difficult to conquer, as that in which the trumpet sounds. But it is really singular to find what a number of extinct families, whose days of greatness were from 1800 till 1810, and how many firms, have vanished in the same period of time. No research has enabled us to discover any of them, though remnants of them may still remain on a lower level.

So it has been until now, and so, we may presume, it will ever be as long as Belfast endures.

The comparative Liberality or Illiberality of Belfast now, as compared with what it was in former years, has often been discussed. In political feeling and in religious liberality it is changed from former days. Various instances of genuine enlargement have been narrated in previous parts of this work, and the strong preponderance which advanced Presbyterianism produced in favour of general liberal views has been distinctly stated. Every one can find examples of such in the interval from 1790 till 1815, and we would not like to hazard an opinion on the subject. Examples on both sides can readily be found.

About sixty-six years ago, a Jewish Rabbi proposed to give some Lectures in Belfast on the Hebrew Scriptures in a large room in Commercial Court. He was countenanced by the intelligent inhabitants, but a rabble gathered at the place, and with drums, noises, and riot prevented the Lectures proceeding.

There is now a Jewish Synagogue in Belfast, many most valuable citizens of that faith, and a resident Doctor or Rabbi.

We think it was very nearly about the same time that the congregation of St. George's Church had the use of the Second Presbyterian Meeting House for their Sunday services. For two months they turned into it for that purpose when the Presbyterians went out. It has also been stated that on one occasion when the Rev. Mr. Bristow, the Vicar of Belfast, was requested to visit a sick parishioner, being unwell himself, and unable to go, he asked Dr. Bruce to be his substitute to administer spiritual consolation.

This last notice is now but a tradition. Many more such instances could be collected, but they convey nothing definite as to the general liberality or otherwise of the town.

The Political feeling has greatly altered of late years. The party animosity has become, during the last twenty years, more marked, disgraceful, and disastrous than it was in the beginning of the century. We remember when, so far as we know, the first lives were lost by party collision. It was in 1813, when two men were shot in North Street. This excited wonderful consternation, and yet we know it was nothing compared with later events. About sixteen years ago, more than a dozen persons were killed in the streets of Belfast, and the town was for several days in possession of a riotous mob. This has given Belfast a bad name in England, and strangers from that country have landed at our quays with pistols in their pockets to defend themselves. We have never seen this, but can very well believe it. A little army is required to keep the town in order on the anniversaries of events that happened nearly two hundred years ago.

The RECLAMATIONS from the sea during this century have been immense. Old men are accustomed to say, that where streets of respectable appearance now are, and through which now they feebly totter, they bathed in the salt sea in their boyish days. The Point fields were then an unoccupied waste, and the waters beside them were the customary bathing-places of the inhabitants of the north end of the town. Now, both the bathing-places and the fields are converted into great docks and warehouses, or streets abounding with the working classes. On the other side of the town it is the same; where the principal markets now are was a literal swamp up till 1810, and we believe considerably later. There was a dock behind Ann Street connected with the Lagan, serving for the timber ponds, which appear to have been sufficient then for the wants of the town. These have since been filled up, and Police Square now occupies their site. We have said scarcely anything about the County Down side of Belfast; but the reclamations of land



there, and the general alterations, have been as great as, or greater than, those on the County Antrim side. Any person who would write fully on this branch of our subject, which we have here just touched upon, would require an amount of knowledge not derivable from memory ; and to the old, the new world of Belfast around them is generally too great for their grasp or comprehension.

GAS is first mentioned about 1810, as having been partially introduced into Glasgow and London. It was nearly a dozen more years before Belfast obtained it. As in other places, small experiments preceded its general introduction. Though stepping out of bounds, we may mention here that we first saw a series of experiments on gas in Rosemary Street, about the year 1820. It was in a shop or house near Winecellar Entry. Great crowds assembled to witness it. The illumination was very great, produced by a small or temporary Retort in the back part of the house. From the appearance of the light, the universal opinion was that the old oil lamps in the streets were doomed to eternal extinction. At the same time, many of the boys in the town of a scientific turn were making *improvised* gaslight. They accomplished this by means of a tobacco pipe, the bowl of which was filled with pounded coal, then covered with clay, and inserted between the bars of a grate, where the fire was burning. Smoke issued from the mouth-piece, which lighted, on the application of a match, and of course burned brightly so long as the coal dust lasted. The discussions on the subject, exactly similar to those now heard about the electric light, were continued here for some time, till the pipes were laid down in the streets, and all doubts as to the inestimable advantages of gas ended.

As has been already stated in our historical sketch, the Revenue of Belfast in the early years of this century amounted to £2,500 per annum for lighting, paving, watching, and every other purpose. Now, as we are informed by a most reliable authority, the taxation of the town for similar purposes is as follows :—



Town Council Amount,	...	...	£105,545
Poor Rates for Union,	...	...	47,000
Water Tax, ...	...	...	21,000
Total Valuation of Borough for 1878,	...	...	£555,194

As there were only 70 years between the two periods, the striking difference is another proof of the rapid development of the town.

Our informant (Thomas Gaffikin, Esq.) has erred a little by including that part of the Union outside the Borough in the list, but probably the voluntary charities of the inhabitants would be a full equivalent.

THE OLD CORPORATION AND THE NEW.—It is well known to all who have any knowledge of Belfast, that its old Corporation, with all its petty privileges and obsolete customs, was abolished about the year 1840. The town had risen up from nothing to have a revenue, seventy years ago, of £2,500 per annum. Newspaper evidence supports this, as in two successive years it states that such was the sum required to be expended.

The Corporation also now had begun to borrow, and they very modestly propose at this time to borrow £2,000, as we formerly stated, for which they offer to pay 6 per cent. There was no compulsory Poor Rate, but, including this item, the revenue of the town now is estimated at £173,545, and no more marked contrast between new and old days, regarding population, manufactures, or any other local topic, could be found than the simple announcement of this extraordinary fact.

THE DISENTAILING DEED.—The habit on the Donegall Estates from early times seems to have been to let the lands to the tenants at very moderate rents—rents which, in recent times, would be merely nominal—on terminable leases, for which small fines were paid; and on the fall of the leases, again to renew them at the old rents, for limited terms, on payment of very moderate fines. Such was the general position of affairs when George Augustus, the late Marquis of Donegall—a nobleman of expensive habits in early life, and who had incurred heavy per-

sonal debts with designing persons for trivial inducements—succeeded to the estates in 1799, on his father's death. He then felt himself under heavy pecuniary engagements. His eldest son, the present Marquis (then Earl of Belfast), became of age in 1818, and with remarkable disregard of his own personal interests, he joined in a disentailing deed in 1819, and in a new family settlement in 1822, by which the estates were opened and re-settled, but under which the late Marquis was empowered to renew the tenants' leases, except in prescribed portions of the estate, at the then existing nominal rents, and to extend them into perpetuities on payment of fines, which were stipulated to be paid to trustees named in the deed, whose duty it was, by means of these fines, to pay off the encumbrances then affecting the estates. The late Mr. Joseph Macartney was the land and law agent of the late Marquis, and to him was intrusted the vastly important duty of carrying his object into effect. Between 1822 and 1831 new leases for lives, renewable for ever, were very extensively made by the late Marquis, at the old rents, and in consideration of fines professed to be paid to the trustees. These new leases were generally made to the tenants, but, in many instances where they did not avail themselves of the opportunity, reversionary leases were made to third parties.

When the late Marquis died, in October, 1844, it was discovered that, although fines to a very large extent had been raised, and in fact paid, no part of them had been applied in discharging the encumbrances, and consequently the estates devolved upon the present Marquis, not only subject to the perpetuity leases so far as granted, but to all the debts and charges to which the inheritance of the estates was liable in the year 1822, and in order to disencumber, the chief rents of a considerable portion of the estate had to be sold through the Landed Estates Court, and were so sold between 1850 and 1853.

Thus the effect of the settlement of 1822 was to give to most of the tenants in the town and neighbourhood of Belfast

perpetuity interests in their holdings on extremely moderate terms, which encouraged them to build and improve, and also enabled them to sub-let in perpetuity to others for the same purpose, which has been extensively done; and so Belfast has rapidly become the great flourishing town it now is.

Had the present Marquis withheld his co-operation in the reopening of the estate in 1822, the perpetuity leases could not have been granted, and the extensive estates would, in 1844, have devolved on him, and have been at his absolute disposal.

Since the present Marquis succeeded, the rental of the estates not renewed has, by judicious management, been immensely increased, and on the fall of leases which now have only a limited number of years to run, the income of the family will be *still further largely supplemented*.

The inhabitants of Belfast are very proud of their town, of the ability and enterprise of their extensive merchants and manufacturers, of the works originated and carried on within it, and, above all, of the prodigious increase of its population during the last half-century. Still there are some necessary projects wanting, of which we will only mention one. In this great town, so abounding with intelligent artisans, there is not, as yet, a Free Public Library for the gratification and instruction of the people. In towns in England and Scotland of far less size and importance than Belfast, such institutions are to be found, and the benefit derived from them is very generally known and appreciated. The subject was mentioned recently by a member of the Town Council, but no adequate response was made. This and an Art Museum are wants which will, without doubt, be supplied in time, to the unspeakable advantage of the whole population.

## SHORT BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICES OF INFLUENTIAL PERSONS CONNECTED WITH BELFAST.

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### CHAPTER VIII.

THE present chapter will probably form the most interesting part of this volume. All persons naturally desire to know something of the history and career of those who have risen above their fellow-townsmen by talent, wealth, or some distinctive mark.

It cannot be said that the following brief sketches include all such. Far from it, indeed; many are omitted, from various causes. There is an excessive difficulty in gathering correct information respecting family history, in some cases from an unwillingness to communicate, in others entire inability to do so, and an indifference to such inquiries. The writer hopes that this the first attempt to write some Belfast biographies will be favourably received, and that he will at least get credit for due discretion in his remarks. Several of the memoirs, it will be perceived, have been written by others, and the whole would have been much more copious if the circumstances alluded to in the Preface had not interfered with further investigation. Correctness in inquiries of this sort is most of all to be desired. Trifling or unavoidable errors may perhaps be occasionally discovered; but it is to be hoped no serious complaint will be made of this chapter under such circumstances.

THE THREE LORD CHANCELLORS—EARL CAIRNS, LORD O'HAGAN, AND SIR JOSEPH NAPIER, BARONET.—No apology is required for introducing, as the first of a number of slight biographical sketches of leading men of the present century, the above three

eminent names. It is unusual to do so, because those who bear them are, fortunately, still living. But the case is so remarkable, in that they were all natives of Belfast, that one of them is at present Lord High Chancellor of England, that the remaining two were Lord Chancellors of Ireland, that Belfast naturally takes a just pride in this fact, and, therefore, it cannot at all be expected they should be omitted. The lives of these three great lawyers will be written at a future day more at large, and by a fully qualified hand. All that can be done here is to preserve a few notable points, while they are still fresh and known to many, to inform the biographers of a future day.

The first in rank is EARL CAIRNS. His family was long established in the Parish of Carnmoney, about three miles from Belfast. The earliest tombstone that has been found in the romantic and beautiful burying-ground attached to the Parish Church records the death of William Cairns in 1775, and of his wife Agnes in 1785. Then in another part of the burying-ground, a considerable distance from the place in which this stone lies, is a railed enclosure, in which is a monument to the memory of William Cairns, who died in 1844, aged 55 years, and his wife, Rose Ann Cairns, who died in 1822, aged 37 years. These two were the father and mother of Earl Cairns. There would seem to have been a generation lapsed or omitted in this tombstone history, there being no monument discovered to the memory of Hugh Cairns and Nathan Cairns, who, we have been informed, were brothers, and both noted members of the family. They may have been the children of the two named on the first tombstone. Nathan was the father of William Cairns, who died as above noticed in 1844, and consequently grandfather of Earl Cairns.

Earl Cairns was born in Donegall Place, Belfast, in December, 1819, which was the temporary abode of his parents during the winter of 1819–20, their usual residence at this time being Rushpark, on the Carrickfergus Road. The Earl was baptised in Carnmoney Church, on the 11th February, 1820, by Mr.

Smith, the vicar of the parish. William Cairns, his father, was born in 1789, but there is no notice of his baptism either in the Parish Register of Carnmoney or in that of Belfast, from which it is probable he was a native of Dublin, his father Nathan having been a resident and in business in that city, we conjecture, in 1789.

Hugh Cairns was the first owner of the adjoining demesne of Parkmount, which he acquired in 1796. He died in 1808, and soon after Parkmount was advertised for sale; inquiries for further information concerning it to be addressed to Nathan Cairns in Dublin or Belfast. On June 25th, 1808, the stock, crop, and farming utensils were also advertised for sale, and on the 28th of the same month the horses and carriages.

The Earl's mother (the Rose Ann noted on the tombstone) was Miss Johnson, daughter of Mr. Hugh Johnson of Belfast. They were married in the year 1806, when William Cairns was a youthful officer in the army, and only seventeen years of age. The lady was three or four years his senior, and was full cousin to the present Sir William Johnson of Belfast. Hugh Johnson had a woollen cloth establishment in Rosemary Street in this town, as his advertisements at the beginning of the century fully prove. He was the first owner of Fortfield, but afterwards retired to a house in Parkmount grounds (now no longer existing), close to the Carrickfergus Road. A great mistake occurred in a Belfast newspaper respecting the death of a Mrs. Cairns at the end of the year 1878. She was there stated to have been the mother of Earl Cairns. This was not so. She was the second wife of William Cairns, and had been a Miss Beggs of Dublin. Mr. Cairns had a large family by his first wife, of whom the Earl was the youngest. The Earl, who so long represented Belfast in the Imperial Parliament, is Chancellor of Dublin University, holds several other positions, and is in every respect of the highest distinction.

A correspondent says, "Nathan Cairns had resided in Dublin, and he came to this town when he succeeded to Parkmount. He had one brother who went abroad, and three sisters



who lived in Belfast; one married Mr. Ballentine, but left no issue."

Another correspondent sends the following information, which does not exactly agree with the preceding regarding the relationship, as it makes the ladies mentioned aunts of Earl Cairns instead of grand-aunts. It says—"Molly Cairns was one of three sisters, clever and masculine, aunts to Sir Hugh Cairns. She was a great Unitarian, and gave Dr. Bruce a present of plate."

Another informant says "that Molly Cairns's married sister, Mrs. Ballentine, was very rich, and gave Dr. Bruce many presents, and that it was not her sister Molly who was so generous."

For all this information regarding Mrs. Ballentine and her sisters we are of course not responsible, and would only observe that the title by which one of them was commonly known is barely so respectful as it might have been. She came to Dr. Bruce's Meeting House generally in a sedan chair, then a common mode of conveyance in the town.

The succession to Parkmount as here given, and the nature of it, is presumptive evidence of the consanguinity between Hugh and Nathan Cairns, for we learn that on the 25th February, 1796, the Marquis of Donegall leased Parkmount to Hugh Cairns for 61 years; this lease states that Thomas Ludford was the previous tenant.

On 1st August, 1812, another lease was made to Nathan Cairns, and again on 21st of January, 1820, a 61-year lease was made to Wm. Cairns, who subsequently, on 1st May, 1823, got a lease for lives renewable for ever.

The property contains 108 Irish acres, and the rent was only £11 18s. 0d.

Ludford's lease was made in 1769, for 3 lives or 52 years, and by it the Earl of Donegall reserved a right of resuming possession on 12 months' notice, and paying for tenant's improvements.

Parkmount was at first a Lodge or occasional residence of the Donegall family, probably of the first Earl, who is said to

have enclosed the Park on the Cave Hill with the wall. This was about 1666. No documentary evidence has been found to prove this. It is preserved only by tradition. As a sort of corroboration, the Earl of Donegall in 1769 leased the place to Mr. Ludford, the connection between whom and the Donegall family is fully stated in our first volume.

For the account of the succession to the beautiful demesne of Parkmount we are indebted to James Torrens, Esq.; and for many facts connected with Carnmoney to the Reverend G. C. Smyth, the rector of the parish; to his brother, the Reverend John Smyth; to James Thomson, Esq. of Macedon; and to Thomas M'Tear, Esq. of Abbotscroft, Whiteabbey.

Earl Cairns began his political life by becoming one of the members of Parliament for Belfast, and was soon favourably noticed by leading statesmen and politicians in England for his great legal knowledge. He is still well remembered by many persons in this town as a youth of great promise when at the Belfast Academy, where he received his elementary education, but no one could ever have anticipated the great elevation to which he has risen in his mature years.

He obtained the honour of knighthood as Sir Hugh M'Calmont Cairns, and became the favourite of a powerful political party in Belfast. Promotion followed, till it finally ended in the Lord Chancellorship and an Earldom.

Some have complained that Earl Cairns now disregards Belfast, and takes no interest in its affairs. His high position, and the duties which it entails, may to some extent account for this apparent apathy. Still, as it is his native place, the scene of his early education and his first political triumphs, the good citizens probably think he should not forget it.

The inhabitants are perhaps unreasonable in their desires, and must be satisfied in thinking that their town has given to the country a Lord High Chancellor of great legal erudition, whose name is now enrolled among the first nobles of England.

Earl Cairns married Miss M'Neill, daughter of the late John M'Neill, Esq., D.L., of Parkmount, Belfast, and niece of that

great controversialist and eminent pulpit orator, the late Dr. Hugh M'Neill, Dean of Ripon.

We have lately examined an extended pedigree of the Cairns family, which has emanated from a very high source. It states at the outset that their introduction into Ireland took place in the reign of James the First, and mentions the name of every Cairns of eminence, during the last two centuries, who had taken part in public affairs, and connects them with the family now under consideration. It also mentions the names and dates of birth of the second family of William Cairns, father of the Lord Chancellor. These details can be introduced only in a formal and extended biography. We have already stated that we do not attempt such, nor any collateral descents. It is only as connected with Belfast that the slight memoir of the Cairns family, or any other, can interest Belfast people, and no more do we attempt. The Belfast history of this family, so far as we have thought it necessary or proper to enter upon it, is an honourable descent, which is clearly traceable to the beginning of last century, if Hugh be taken as the ancestor.

We do not attempt to give in detail a more lengthened account of this the Cairns family of Belfast, with which locality we may take upon us to say it was infinitely more identified than with any other in Ireland.

From the preceding narrative it appears that Hugh Cairns, Esq., was the first of his family who possessed Parkmount, and yet it is singular that there is no place in Carnmoney graveyard noting the burial-place of Hugh. He lived in Parkmount for 12 years, and at his death left a handsome bequest to the Old Poor House. The next possessor was Nathan, as one who was intimate with him has assured us that he visited the said Nathan there in 1811. He died in Dublin, and was interred in the cemetery of Mary's Abbey in that city.

Parkmount was finally sold, in 1828 or 1829, to John M'Neill, Esq., D.L., Banker of Belfast, in whose family it now remains.

The next Lord Chancellor to be noticed is THOMAS, LORD O'HAGAN. His father, Edward Hagan, was personally known to the writer, and very many years ago carried on business in Gordon Street, Belfast, but afterwards extended it in a different part of the town, and became a general merchant. He was a Roman Catholic, and lived in those days when the respectable members of that communion were much less numerous than they are at present, and when the liberal-minded Dr. Croll was the parish priest of Belfast. Mr. Edward Hagan was one of that class, and was a thoroughly upright and worthy man. He married Miss Bell, daughter of Captain Thomas Bell, and Lord O'Hagan is their only son.

In early life Lord O'Hagan married Miss Teeling, and some years after her death he married Miss Townley, a member of one of the best and oldest of the English Roman Catholic families. By this marriage he has a son and heir to inherit his honours (see the *Peerage* for 1880). His Lordship's career has been eminently successful, his popularity and the esteem in which he is held universal.

Lord O'Hagan received his education at the Academical Institution in his native town, and we have been told by an intimate friend of his that he never entered any other high-class seminary, and afterwards regretted that he had not undergone a regular University training. He was, in very early life, distinguished for oratory and literary acquirements, and in his youth edited a small magazine in this town printed by Mr. Teeling. He also followed some other semi-literary occupations. But the sphere of Belfast was too narrow. He went to Dublin, as the phrase is, "to push his fortune."

An anecdote is related of Lord O'Hagan by the Rev. Mr. Crozier, in his *Life of Dr. Montgomery* (vol. i., p. 164), from which we make the following summary. Thomas O'Hagan was long a favourite pupil of Dr. Montgomery, who greatly admired him for his rare elocutionary talents and his general assiduity. One day the future Lord Chancellor's father called on Dr. Montgomery, and asked for his advice as to what he

should do with his son, or to what profession he should bring him up. Dr. Montgomery, who was a wise and sagacious man, advised that he be sent to the Bar, which advice was followed, we all know with what result. Mr. Crozier errs in stating the name of Lord O'Hagan's father; it was Edward Hagan; neither did he use the prefix O. That was adopted by Lord O'Hagan at an early period of his professional career when he went to Dublin, where he considered himself almost unfriended and unknown.

He entered on the profession of the law, soon acquired distinction in it, and, after some years of labour, obtained an official appointment, became a Judge, and finally the Lord Chancellor of Ireland. Lord O'Hagan frequently speaks now in the House of Lords, and often also to less august assemblies but wherever and whenever such occasions occur, the beautiful and imaginative language which he has ever at command is heard with delight, and stamps him as a man of high culture and varied attainments.

Mr. William Napier, the father of SIR JOSEPH NAPIER, our third Lord Chancellor, was a respectable and wealthy Brewer in the early years of this century. His Brewery was in Bank Lane, and his residence, as was the custom of the time when it was at all practicable, closely adjoined it in the same lane. The house is still standing, but the Brewery has been removed.

Mr. William Napier was married to a Miss M'Naughton, a member of a respectable family of that name who lived near Clough, County Antrim.

He was a very intelligent gentleman, and we remember him frequently attending in Dr. Thomson's school when the Geography class was being examined, in which his two eldest sons were. On these occasions Dr. Thomson would inquire of him if he wished to ask the boys any questions. His answer was, "Oh no, Mr. Thomson; the boys could ask me questions which perhaps I might find it difficult to answer."

Mr. Napier was a Presbyterian, his name appearing in the roll of membership of the First Congregation in Rosemary

Street in 1813, and several following years. He subsequently had a country residence in a place as destitute now of all country attributes as can be conceived. The entrance to it was nearly opposite the Gas Works, at the corner of Donegall Pass. He built for himself a very fine mansion in Wellington Place, at the corner of Fountain Street, for his residence. We have reason to think, however, that his family were all born in Bank Lane. One of his daughters was married to Lord Chief-Justice Whiteside. He had at least four sons, of whom Sir Joseph was the third. They were all fellow-pupils with the writer in the Academical Institution, Belfast, and previously with Mr. Sheridan Knowles.

Sir Joseph distinguished himself at the Bar, was a warm politician on the Conservative side, and was rewarded by official appointments, and finally filled the office of Lord Chancellor of Ireland. He resigned with his party many years ago on the usual pension, but acted occasionally as an appeal judge, for which his talent and high legal knowledge eminently qualified him. He was created a Baronet, and took part in the settlement of the affairs of the Church of Ireland after its disestablishment in 1869, having become zealously attached to Episcopacy.

Sir Joseph was also the Parliamentary representative for many years of the University of Dublin.

The foregoing biographies of our three Lord Chancellors are but mere sketches. They could not have been made more brief, but they fully confirm the remark in our introductory observations, that they disclose a remarkable history.

It is true, it may be said, and it has been said, that political influence, or rather political expediency, has had some effect in raising these three to such elevated stations. Even making some allowance for this circumstance, it is, to say the least of it, most noteworthy that three lawyers, natives of the town, destitute alike of ancient lineage or aristocratic connections, those adventitious circumstances so often the stepping-stones to official greatness, should have risen, each of them, in the same century



at the same time, to titles, and to the very highest office which their learned profession made it possible for them to attain.

CHIEF BARON JOY.—This great lawyer was a native of Belfast, grandson or great-grandson of Francis Joy, who originated the *News-Letter* in 1737, the first newspaper that was ever published in Belfast. Francis Joy was also the earliest manufacturer of paper in Ulster, at Randalstown, in the County of Antrim. The Chief Baron, when a young man at the Bar, defended Thomas Russell, who had been unhappily led into taking part in Emmet's rebellion in 1803, and was extensively employed in similar cases, though himself what is called a Conservative. He was raised to the high office of Chief Baron of the Exchequer in 1831, but he only enjoyed it for a very limited period, having died in 1838. (For notices of the Joy family in the 18th century in Belfast, see Vol. I., pp. 438, 439.) His statue in marble, by the distinguished sculptor, Behnes of London, originally stood in St. Patrick's Cathedral, but has since been removed to the Four Courts, Dublin, as a more appropriate site.

REVEREND WILLIAM BRISTOW.—Two correspondents (W. H. H. Lyons, Esq., Brookhill, Lisburn, great-grandson of the Rev. Wm. Bristow, and another well-qualified correspondent more nearly connected) have obligingly communicated the following interesting particulars of Mr. Bristow, for thirty-three years Vicar of Belfast. They are, in the main, correct, though our two correspondents do not agree in all their statements.

"The Rev. William Bristow of Belfast was son of the Rev. Skeffington Bristow, Rector of Rasharkin, Co. Antrim. This gentleman was married to Miss Grattan, aunt of the famous Henry Grattan. This fact is mentioned by Mrs. Delany, who visited the family in the course of her tour to the Causeway in 1758.

"This Rev. Skeffington Bristow was father of the Rev. William Bristow, who was his eldest son; his second son was James, afterwards Sir James; and the third son was Samuel, father of the Rev. John Bristow, of St. James's Church, Belfast.

Samuel was much younger than either William or James. They were all first cousins of Henry Grattan."

The preceding, from Mr. Lyons, only establishes the fact of the paternity of William Bristow and James his brother.

To the preceding communication respecting the Rev. William Bristow, the following extract from Mrs. Delany's Letters is added in corroboration of it :—

"Next morning we set out, and breakfasted where we now are, at Mr. Bristow's, a clergyman, a pupil of Dr. Delany's. His wife was a niece of the Grattans, whom you have heard the Dean often mention. He is a merry, good sort of hearty man, and she a very good-humoured, prattling woman, much reserved the first day, but now very easy, and seemingly well pleased with her guests. She has two sons, one a man grown. They are happy and contented, and very hospitable."

The "man grown" here mentioned was William, the future Vicar of Belfast; the other was James. Samuel, it may be surmised, was yet unborn, if the account as given by our first correspondent is to be relied on.

The following, from our second correspondent, relates to other members of the family. He makes the third son Skeffington, not Samuel.

"Your information is correct, with the exception of the younger sons of the Rev. Skeffington Bristow, Rector of Rasharkin. There were only three sons—the Rev. W. Bristow, Vicar of Belfast; Sir James Bristow, and Skeffington Bristow, captain in the army. The latter had three sons and one daughter; the eldest, Skeffington, died young. James and Joseph came to Belfast when boys. The latter was in the Bank of Ireland, Belfast Branch, for many years, and died unmarried; the former, James, was Director of the Northern Bank. James left four sons: the eldest, James, who succeeded him in the Bank, died at Wilmont; Samuel, the second, is in business in Liverpool; the third is the Rev. John Bristow, of St. James's Church, Belfast; the fourth, E. J. Bristow, is in business in Belfast. Mr. Bristow of Wilmont was a Presbyterian, although all his family had been

Episcopalians. He came to live with his maternal uncle, the late Dr. S. S. Thomson, when a boy, and went with him to Dr. Bruce's Church; afterwards, he became an attached member of the late Dr. Morgan's congregation."

We have been unable to obtain any material traits or characteristics of Mr. Bristow of Belfast. We know one person, now in his eighty-fifth year, who was a member of his congregation, and who heard him preach, and there are probably others. He is universally well spoken of as a liberal and genial man, and a most excellent preacher. Old persons who still remember him describe his personal appearance as dignified, wearing a full-bottomed wig, and a very long gold-headed cane. The Duke of Rutland offered to knight him on the occasion of a visit to Belfast. Mr. Bristow declined, on which the Viceroy conferred the doubtful honour on his brother James.

Mr. Bristow is also said to have always worn the gold chain still possessed and occasionally used by the Mayors of Belfast; it was the symbol of the Sovereign's office in former times.

There is probably no one now living who would be able to tell any familiar traits of Mr. Bristow; several have seen him, but at such a youthful time of their lives as to render any intercourse with one of his age impossible. His vicariate continued for thirty-three years, and his chief magistracy of the town for eleven, extending through the disquieting times preceding the rebellion, and through the whole of that calamitous time. In his capacity of Sovereign he acted with the most perfect firmness and discretion, and in that of clergyman, with liberality, zeal, and ability.

The praises bestowed on him in the following curtailed notice of his funeral are altogether just, and but a short portion of the memoir, all in the same tone, which appeared after his death. He died on the 22nd December, 1808, and was buried on the 26th, with a display the equal of which had never before been seen in Belfast, and fully expressive of the respect and esteem in which he was held.

The funeral was attended with some curious usages, as we

would now consider them, a very short account of which is subjoined.

FUNERAL OF MR. BRISTOW.—“This day, 26th December 1808, the mortal remains of the Rev. Wm. Bristow were conveyed to the Family Burying Place at Newtownbreda.

“The universal feeling of unfeigned sorrow, upon the death of ‘a gentleman’ so long resident here, and so highly respected, was depicted on every countenance, and the last mark of respect was evinced by the general attendance at his funeral. During the day the Church Bell tolled, and the vessels in the harbour had their colours hoisted half-mast high. There was a large attendance of persons of the first rank.

“After the service in the Church, the procession proceeded thus :—

A Field Officer's Party of the Limerick Militia,  
with Arms reversed.

The Band of the Regiment playing an appropriate Piece  
of Music.

General Gordon, the Earl of Westminster,  
and the Officers of the Garrison.

THE BODY.

The Relatives in 5 Carriages.

The Executors of the Deceased.

The Clergy.

The Marquis of Donegall in his Carriage.

Gentlemen in their Carriages, upwards of 50.

A great number of gentlemen on horseback closed the  
Procession.

REVEREND EDWARD MAY.—The family of May was in Belfast at the beginning of the century. Edward May, junior, was brother of the Marchioness of Donegall, and consequently brother-in-law of the second Marquis. He first acted as Agent for the estate, and his name frequently appears in that capacity in the newspaper.

In December, 1808, the Rev. William Bristow died, and two months after—that is, in February, 1809—Edward May, junior,

was ordained by the Lord Bishop in Lisburn Cathedral; on the 28th April he was first called the Reverend Edward May, and next month he was inducted into the parish of Belfast, and preached in St. Anne's Church his first sermon. There is an abstract of the sermon in the newspaper, and it is greatly praised for elegance of language and clearness of reasoning. It was a charity sermon, at which the principal people of Belfast were present. Dr. Bruce attended, and was one of the collectors on the occasion. On the 13th of June following, Mr. May was married in Belfast Church, by the Reverend Robert Dobbs, to Miss Sinclaire, daughter of the late William Sinclaire, Esq., of Donegall Place. He is called in this notice Rector of Belfast—Lord Donegall, by reason of relationship no doubt, granted to him the rectorial or greater tithes. The present Lord Chief-Justice May is his son, and a native of Belfast. Mr. May was, during several years, Sovereign of the town after his ordination, and his father, of the same name, was frequently chosen by Lord Donegall to represent the borough in the Imperial Parliament.

MR. JOSEPH MACARTNEY AND THE REV. A. C. MACARTNEY.—These were brothers, and both were sons of the Rev. Dr. Macartney, incumbent of Antrim and sundry other parishes in the old pluralist days. The former was Agent to the Marquis of Donegall, and was the medium for negotiating the amount to be paid by the owners of tenements in Belfast for the perpetuity leases under which the town is now generally held.

The Rev. A. C. Macartney was the well-known Vicar in succession to Mr. May. His history is somewhat romantic. When in College, about the year 1798, he overheard some persons plotting a conspiracy to overthrow the Government, or in some way to assist the rebel interest. He communicated this information to the authorities, whereupon he was challenged by the persons so accused, and had to fight no less than three duels, of the result of any of which we are not informed. This warlike demonstration caused ordination for the church to be refused to him, on which he entered the army, fought all through the Peninsular war as a Captain of the Royal Artillery, and, when

the peace came, received a pension. Ordination also was not now withheld, and this brave Captain of Artillery was ordained and appointed by the Marquis of Donegall Vicar of Belfast, and, we believe, performed all the duties of the office in a proper and exemplary manner.

### EMINENT PHYSICIANS OF BELFAST.

The following memoirs of three eminent physicians of Belfast have been written for this work by Dr. C. D. Purdon of this town, whose contributions to its early history are well known and justly appreciated. Memoirs of many other medical men could have been added, but we have selected those who commenced to practise in the last century. As too great a number would have swelled our pages to an undue length, and as the omission of any might have appeared ungracious, we were obliged to be contented with the three here named, the oldest, and perhaps the most eminent, of them all.

“DR. JAMES M'DONNELL, a learned and deeply read physician, one of the M'Donnells of the Glens, was born in the year 1762. He studied in Edinburgh, where he took his degree in 1784, on which occasion his Thesis was ‘On the drowned.’ In it he discussed, with great judgment, the various means then known for the restoration of drowned persons, and, as a last resource, suggested the trial of transfusion. He settled in Belfast, soon became known as a learned physician, and one who on every occasion was anxious to promote the diffusion of knowledge, for we find, in the records of the Belfast Charitable Society, that Dr. M'Donnell requested permission from the said Corporation to use their large room for the purpose of keeping the books of the Belfast Society for Promoting Knowledge, until a convenient place was obtained for them. He cultivated this taste for acquiring information, notwithstanding his great practice, and he formed an extensive library, in which were many most valuable books. Several of them were given as donations from those that derived benefit from his advice, as tokens of their gratitude. One of these the



writer saw, which had a dedicatory inscription in it from the Marchioness of Londonderry, on account of the valuable advice that was given to her in recommending that her children be nursed by herself, and thereby discouraging the pernicious custom of employing wet-nurses. Nor did he confine his learning to forming a library only, for he also added to his literary treasures a museum of natural history. He devoted a considerable portion of his time and talents to alleviating the sufferings of the humble and destitute, as he energetically aided Dr. Stephenson, sen., in his exertions to obtain a Fever Hospital and Dispensary for the benefit of the poor. When Physician to the Hospital, in 1827, he was the first to originate clinical instruction. Notwithstanding his extensive practice and numerous engagements, he still continued his investigation bearing on his great paper 'On the Differential Pulse' with such ardour that on one occasion he nearly lost his life. His appearance was well known to every one of the inhabitants, as he always went about clothed in drab-coloured knee-breeches and white stockings: when travelling, he would always be seen sitting beside his servant 'Mike,' and reading a book through a magnifying-glass held in his hand. 'Mike,' as the Doctor's servant was called, was as well known as Sir Astley Cooper's Jew-driver was; he always considered that he and the Doctor were joint-partners, or at least expressed himself as such; he imbibed the Doctor's tastes, and especially that of forming a Museum of Natural History, which he made in his room, often borrowing from his master different articles that he took a fancy to. After the Doctor's death, he returned to his native Glens, and being so long associated with the Doctor, the natives thought that he had acquired the same skill in treating diseases that his master had, and, as I was informed, sought for his advice constantly, which was always given, often successfully, for he had obtained a number of his master's recipes, which he marked as useful in certain complaints. The vehicle that Dr. M'Donnell preferred was an old-fashioned gig, supported on C springs. He continued in active practice, until advanced years and chronic bronchitis,

brought on by severe wettings—for he never carried an umbrella—compelled him to retire into that private station that proved a rest to him after a long life of toil and labour. He died in 1845 in his 82nd year.”

To the preceding account of Dr. James M'Donnell we append the following extracts from two letters addressed to the author of this work by Dr. John M'Donnell of Dublin, son of the eminent physician of Belfast. They are quite appropriate.

“I very often drove my father in his old gig while he read, but I never knew him to use a magnifying-glass for the purpose; and his man *Mick*, a perfect original, would not be recognised by his numerous friends under the name of Mike. By the strictest economy, and laying out his savings very prudently and skilfully in house property in Belfast, he accumulated £1,100 while in my father's service, and spent it in constituting himself a landed proprietor on Fair Head. I was once hospitably entertained by him at his seat on his estate.” . . . . .

“Your volumes will be the standard of reference and authority in respect to the history of Belfast, and I would gladly read recorded in them two items regarding two men of whom I think the town has reason to be proud—I mean my father and brother.

“First.—In the year 1828, my father was presented with a service of plate, value £700, from the inscription on which I copy the following:—‘To James M'Donnell, Esq., M.D., who during a period of nearly forty years has devoted his time and eminent talents to the work of humanity, whose gratuitous advice has been always at the service of the poor, and to whose exertions this town has been principally indebted for that invaluable institution, the Fever Hospital and Dispensary, this service of plate has been presented by the Nobility, Ladies, and Gentlemen of Belfast and its vicinity, as a tribute of their respect and esteem. A.D. 1828.’

“Second.—My brother gained the four Oxford University prizes, which are open to competition by all the colleges of the University. This had never been done by the same person

but once before—viz., by Millman, afterwards Dean of St. Paul's, and I have good reason to believe it has never been done a third time.

“ You inquire, in yours of September 29th, if your information as to the places of my father's birth and burial is correct. He was buried in the old churchyard of Layde, near Cushendall, the spot marked by a beautiful Irish cross. This had been our family burial-place since 1647, in which year our distinguished ancestor, Sir Alaster M'Donnell, created a knight of the field by Montrose, was killed in the south of Ireland, and buried in the grave of the O'Callaghans, at Kanturk, Co. Cork. I cannot say certainly where my father was born, but I believe it was in the house you mention—not ‘ a large one,’ but larger than its present descendant; I say ‘ descendant,’ for it has descended a story since my first acquaintance with it. It has sometimes been occupied by the Coast Guard.

“ My grandmother M'Donnell lived in it many years after her husband's death. From there my father and his brothers went to learn what Horace calls the *elementa prima*, in a school held in one of the Red Bay caves by Maurice Traynor, a very remarkable man, unrivalled in all the country round as a teacher, who, in those days, might have been transported for teaching the three boys to read. He was a Roman Catholic, and they were Protestants. Their father was a Roman Catholic, but their mother (Elizabeth Stewart, of the Ballydivity family, before they took the name of Stewart Moore) was a Protestant, and was allowed by my grandfather to bring up her sons Protestants.

“ I remember, as vividly as if it were not ten years ago, taking a night ride from Belfast to Cushendall with my father seventy-five years since. We left home about midnight, and arrived at Garron Point at dawn of a summer's morning. We tied our horses to bushes, and scrambled up to the extremity of the promontory; and I can fancy that I see at this moment the noble view of the North Channel, bounded on the east by a long stretch of Wigtownshire, Ailsa, Arran, and the ancient possessions of my Highland forefathers, Cantyre, Isla, and Jura, and by the

Antrim coast on the west, some stars still glimmering in the deep blue over the lovely Ardclinis; and that I hear the dash of the waves, the scream of the sea-gulls, and the wild sweet whistle of the curlews.

“On this occasion my father told me that, when he settled in Belfast, and till his professional engagements rendered it impossible, he paid his mother a visit at this house once a fortnight. He left home at midnight, found a fresh horse waiting for him at Glenarm, spent some hours lying on a sofa talking to his mother, and rode back to Belfast within the 24 hours—a ride of about 100 English miles. My father’s ante-college education was conducted by Mr. Garnet, the predecessor of our preceptor, Dr. Bruce.

“I knew him well, and every truant knew.”

We have said that Dr. M'Donnell was born in a house which is still standing close to the sea-side, about a quarter of a mile from Cushendall, on the road to Red Bay; and that he was buried among his ancestors at Layde, where the ruins of the old Abbey are to be seen, about a quarter of a mile from Cushendall, in the opposite direction, on the old road leading to Cushendun.

These few words will explain the allusions in this letter of Dr. John M'Donnell.

“DR. S. S. STEPHENSON, an eminent and most honourable physician, practised in this town in the latter part of the last century, and in the beginning of the present. In him was an illustration as to how a man could change the current of great talents into a different groove from that in which for a considerable portion of his life (and that the best part) they had been employed. He was born in Stranocum in the early part of the last century, and, being destined by his parents for the ministry, after having completed his education and studies, was ordained by the Presbytery, and preached his first sermon in the Meeting House at Templepatrick, his father being one of the congregation; afterwards he received a call from the Greyabbey congregation, which was accepted, and he

laboured for several years with much acceptance there. In his leisure moments he cultivated the science of Archæology, writing several learned papers; one of these was on the Linen Manufacture in Ireland, &c.; another was a 'Historical Essay on the Parish and Congregation of Templepatrick.' In these he displayed great learning and research; his tastes were so well known, that he became possessor of several valuable cinerary urns that were discovered in a tumulus that was opened in Mountstewart, and also the bell that was discovered in Bangor Abbey; but, owing to theological differences, he severed his connection with the Synod of Ulster, resigned his position as minister of the Greyabbey congregation, and, though in middle age, went over to Glasgow, studied in the University, took out his medical degree, and came to Belfast (the population of which at that time was about 17,000). But though ministerially separated from his congregation, he was still held in such respect in that part of the country, that on the volunteers being raised, he was requested to accept the appointment of surgeon to the corps that was raised in the Ards; this he consented to do.

"At the time he came to Belfast, the celebrated Dr. Haliday was about to retire. Owing to his great abilities, Dr. Stephenson soon obtained the foremost position amongst the medical practitioners.

"He was very benevolent to the poor, who not only found in him a physician, but also a friend. In 1792, in conjunction with Dr. M'Donnell, he succeeded in establishing a Dispensary (relieving thereby the Belfast Charitable Society from out-door relief). In 1797, seeing that fever was being imported from Portpatrick, he was foremost in advocating the establishment of a Fever Hospital, in which he was successful, as a house was taken in Berry Street for that purpose. During the first six months he attended 73 cases, and so successful was his treatment, that out of the first 60 cases admitted only one died. The prompt measures initiated by him were so successful that the epidemic soon abated. I need only say that he was acknowledged

to be the first fever doctor in the town, and when the Hospital was re-established in West Street, and afterwards removed to its present situation, it was considered a privilege to have him as medical attendant. He continued in extensive practice long after he had arrived at the usual allotted period of life, and died full of years (over ninety). He was incapable of doing a dishonourable or unkind action, and was always most considerate towards his juniors. His memory was most retentive, as he recollected circumstances that had taken place when he was only two years of age."

He resided, about the year 1820, in Waring Street, where Mr. Cramsie's Auction Mart now is, or at least close by. There were many private houses at the time in this street. He was born in the year 1737, and died in 1830, aged ninety-three.

"DR. FORSYTHE, an eminent practitioner of great abilities and versatile talents, was the son of John Forsythe. He was born in the year 1756, at Bally<sup>more</sup>~~mena~~, and received his education in a country school in Ballyeaston. When it was completed, he was sent to Edinburgh, where he took his degree; he then settled in Newtownards, but soon afterwards removed to Belfast; after practising there for some years, he went to England, and, though a stranger, by the energy of his character succeeded in establishing himself in a lucrative practice in two places, which he sold, on leaving, to his successors for a considerable sum of money. With this he returned to Belfast, and soon became known as an eminent physician. When his practice became extensive, he entered into partnership with the late Dr. S. S. Thomson, who was just then commencing. This was, after some time, dissolved, and he continued his professional pursuits alone during the rest of his life, but these not affording him sufficient scope for his abilities, he frequently entered into mercantile speculations, which assisted him in realising a very handsome income. Being always on the look-out for commercial ventures, he was a frequent visitor on the "Change," transacting business like any other merchant. His professional information was mainly obtained from close observation of



human nature, which he thoroughly understood. His appearance was imposing, as he was tall and proportionally made, at once striking the observer with respect, for, on addressing him, he looked as if he could read one through. He was a strong politician, and so great were his reasoning powers, that he could use them successfully on either side of the question. In these debates, after he had succeeded in silencing his opponents, he would ask them to take his side of the question, and then he would argue it over again, having adopted the opposite views. He continued in extensive practice (doing many kind actions to those who required them) until very advanced age obliged him to retire from actively following his profession, when, in accordance with his great judgment respecting healthy localities, he selected Holywood as the most suitable place for prolonging his days. The wisdom of this decision was manifested by the wonderful share of health he enjoyed, notwithstanding his very advanced age, which was prolonged to about ninety-four years, and during this time all his faculties remained unimpaired."

THE STEWART FAMILY, AND OTHERS, OF MALONE.—Before copying this paper, we may say that William Stewart and Robert Stewart contributed £300 each in 1782 to the building of the Linen Hall in Belfast, that no family was more influential in their day, and that now not one of the direct connection remains either in Malone or Belfast.

The history of this old family, one of the oldest certainly about Belfast, is briefly detailed in the subjoined account, extracted from copious information furnished by Robert Templeton, Esq., M.D., of Orange Grove, Belfast :—

"Mr. Eccles, who received King William at Orange Grove, in Malone, in 1690, had three daughters, and one son, John. The first was married to Mr. Legg of Malone; the second, to Mr. Black, and was grandmother of Dr. Joseph Black, the eminent chemist; the third, to Mr. Clarke.

"No explanation is given anywhere as to the relationship of John Eccles of Orange Grove with Hugh of Belfast, who issued

the Token (see Vol. I., p. 458), and who was one of the principal merchants of the town, but the probability is that they were brothers. Mr. William Eccles of Rockfield, Arklow, must have been a descendant of John Eccles; he often visited his cousin, Robert Stewart of Ballydrain, for weeks at a time; Miss Eccles and he spent the winter of 1787 there. The Stewarts came from Scotland in 1641, and settled at Ballydrain. There are few inquiring persons about Belfast who have not heard of the Stewarts of Ballydrain, but their early settlement at that place is not so well known.

“John Stewart of Ballydrain, grandfather or great-grandfather to the above Robert, married Ann Wilson. Their daughter, Florence Stewart, was married to Thomas Martin of Belfast and Whitehouse.

“John Stewart made large additions to Ballydrain House. He was married to Jane Legg, and their family consisted of four sons and two daughters. Eleanor, one of these daughters, died unmarried at an advanced age, having obtained much property from her uncle, Benjamin Legg, who had married Miss Wilson of Purdy's Burn. She left Myrtlefield and Maryville, after building houses on them, to her nieces. She also built Windsor in Ballydrain grounds, where she and one of her four brothers, Alexander, lived, till he built Macedon, on the other side of the town, where he died. Miss Stewart and one of her brothers, Thomas, died at Windsor in 1806. He lived at Whitehouse in summer, and in Castle Street, Belfast, in winter. The former residence had belonged to the Martins before he got it. He left it to his nephew Thomas. Alexander Stewart, son of William Stewart of Wilmont, died in Canada, where his sons still live. Robert Stewart of Ballydrain married Miss Mitchell of Dublin. Her two brothers followed her, and married in the neighbourhood of Belfast, where their descendants still are. He died at Ballydrain in 1785, leaving five daughters and one son. His eldest daughter was married to the Rev. John Clarke, who was curate to Mr. Bristow, and who, worn out by his excessive labours connected with the establishment of the Dispensary, and his

unceasing and benevolent attentions to the poor in the famine years, was forced to retire to Oxford, where he died in the year 1800. He was uncle to the late John Clarke, Esq., J.P., Mayor of Belfast in 1844, and to the present Edward H. Clarke, Esq., Malone, Belfast. The second was married to Walter Wilson of Croglin, in Dumfriesshire; the third, to George Black of Strandmillis; the fourth died at Bath, unmarried; the fifth was married to the Rev. James Sturrock, whose grandson still lives in Belfast.

"Martha, sister of Miss Eleanor Stewart of Windsor, married Israel Younghusband of Whitehaven, and had three children; one of them, John, married Letitia Black of Strandmillis, and afterwards lived at Ballydrain; and Jane, his sister, married Mr. Nathaniel Magee of Newbridge, now Lismoyne. George Stewart married Miss Rainey of Greenville, and died at Macedon in 1805. It was sold after his death. He had sold Ballydrain a short time before to his cousin, John Younghusband, who afterwards sold it to Mr. Hugh Montgomery. His sons died abroad.

"Benjamin Legg married Jane Park; one of his daughters, Jane, was married to her cousin, Robert Thompson. She was mother of John Thompson and Miss Jenny. Another sister, Eleanor, was married to James Templeton."

As a history of several families of Belfast, in a collected form, which may be filled up by the inquiry of others, and in a place where old families are so scarce, it may possibly excite some notice. As a sort of corroboration to some parts of it, the advertisement of the sale of Macedon, in which reference is made to its late possessor, called the late George Alexander Stewart, son of Robert of Ballydrain, is in the *News-Letter* of 1806.

THE TURNLEY FAMILY.—This family is old in Belfast, though the members of it never appear in any corporate capacity. The writer perfectly well remembers the expression, "Turley's Brewery." Such was the pronunciation given by the common people. In 1802, however, the Mr. Turnley of that day owned

much property in the town, and was an extensive merchant. He was particularly the owner, we believe, of that large block commencing at the Queen's Bridge, facing the sea on that side, Ann Street on another side, and Prince's Street on the third. In that block the Brewery was, and still is, the oldest in the town. In 1802, Messrs. Turnley & Batt, with all the other brewers and distillers in the town, advertise that they will not purchase any grain on commission within less than twenty miles of Belfast, but will buy from the farmers whatever barley or oats may be offered for sale here, and pay for the same in gold.

It is not likely that Messrs. Turnley & Batt knew much about the affairs of the Brewery, but that it was carried on merely as an adjunct to their general mercantile business. In 1812 or 1814, Mr. Francis Turnley, the son we suppose of him who was engaged in trade with Mr. Batt, bought considerable estates in the County of Antrim, some of which adjoined the romantic village of Cushendall. The great trees in the surrounding country were all planted by him, as well as the extensive woods at Drumnasole, near Carnlough, at which place he built a fine house, now occupied by his son, John Turnley, Esq. The elder Mr. Turnley was a most active and benevolent man. He was the first to improve the coast road at his own expense; cut the arch at Red Bay through the sandstone rock, and spared no expense in the improvement of his own village of Cushendall. At his death his will was set aside, and the estate is now in Chancery. The family are still the owners of some property in Belfast.

The residence and Brewery of this old Belfast family were at the Bridge End in Ann Street, and both are still there. The house is a fine large building. The Brewery still presents at its entrance quite an antiquated appearance.

The following letter from Mr. William Batt contains further information respecting the Turnley family, and is as follows:—

“Francis Turnley was my grandfather, and he lived in the house next the Brewery. He had three sons: John died at

Rockport in 1841; Francis died at Richmond Lodge in 1844; and his youngest son, Alexander, died in Belfast in 1850. I believe he lived for some time in what is now known as Birkmyre's house, after his father's death; my grandfather died in 1802, and my grandmother in 1812. I suppose you are aware that my grandfather was the owner of the Quay property, including the Old Custom House, and also the shop in which Charles and William Thompson carried on the grocery business."

Mr. Batt further adds that he himself was born in the mansion of the Turnley family, in Ann Street, in 1796. He likewise mentions the rather curious fact that four Batts (brothers) lived in separate houses, all in Donegall Place—his own father, the Reverend William Batt, being one of the number; and that he and his son are the only members of the family now residing in Belfast.

We may possibly be in error as to some of the Christian names of the members of the Turnley family, not having received a reply to inquiries on this subject.

THE FERGUSON FAMILY.—The family of Ferguson is one of the very few in Belfast who have legitimate claims to a long standing in it. The late John Francis Ferguson informed the writer that, so far as he knew, the first of them who came to this country was an army surgeon to the forces of William the Third. If so, he was most probably the Dr. Victor Ferguson who appears, in Dr. Kirkpatrick's work of *Presbyterian Loyalty*, in a conspicuous and honourable light as a defender of John M'Bride of Belfast when persecuted for his opinions, and otherwise as an advocate of liberality and of the opinions held by the Belfast Society. This Dr. Victor Ferguson is claimed indeed as the direct ancestor of the late Mr. Ferguson. His son was also a medical man, but connected also with the linen business, in which he made great improvements. He lived in the last century. His son was John S. Ferguson, who was a still more extensive linen merchant.

Mr. John S. Ferguson, at the beginning of this century, was



the owner of the Bleach Green at Ballysillan, the nearest to the town on the old Antrim Road; he had also a paper mill at Antrim, and was likewise among the principal gentry of Belfast when it was a more aristocratic place than it is now—at least the Marquis of Donegall and family chiefly resided in it. He resided in Donegall Place, the very last house next the Linen Hall, and the last but one of the private residences of which Donegall Place was once entirely composed.

For some notice of Dr. Victor Ferguson, and notable facts respecting the position of theological differences of the time, see *Presbyterian Loyalty*, pp. 529–564.

We append a copy of Dr. Victor Ferguson's Will, from the Record Office in Dublin, which, though not coincident in point of time with our present publication, is at least a town family document, and will probably be acceptable to many of our readers as a genuine Belfast will of more than 150 years ago.

The Will is dated 1723; he describes himself as a Doctor of Physic, and appoints Colonel Upton and Colonel Brice of Belfast his Trustees.

“He leaves his dearly beloved son-in-law, Captain James McCullogh, and his dearly beloved daughter, his wife, six of his best Chairs in his parlour, with his large Silver Salver, six Silver Spoons, six Silver Forks, and six Silver-handled Knives; Forty Shilling per annum during her natural life to his dear sister, Mrs. Corry of Newton; £5 to the poor of Belfast, to be distributed among them as Colonel Brice and the Revd. James Kirkpatrick think fit; £650 to buy real estate for his son.”

Mr. John S. Ferguson had several sons, now all dead, the last of them, John Francis Ferguson already mentioned in this sketch, having died in September, 1879; and a very few weeks after, a great placard appeared in front of this house, once so secluded, and always so beautiful, announcing an auction sale of all its contents.

The members of this family are interred in the burying ground behind the Poor House, as many of the old Belfast



families are. We are conscious this is a most unfinished and imperfect sketch of the Fergusons of Belfast, and it is much to be regretted that those in this town and elsewhere, who possess an ancestry worthy of being remembered, seem entirely regardless of the fact; and in the absence of all written records such families are forgotten in a few years.

THE POTTINGER FAMILY.—Of this old Belfast family much was written in our former volume, chiefly of Thomas Pottinger, the noted Sovereign who was thrust in upon the Corporation by the Government of James the Second.

The life history of Thomas Pottinger was disclosed for the first time from the Treasury Papers quite recently compiled, and from the writing of the Town Clerk of Belfast nearly two hundred years ago, accompanied with reflections in most quaint and original style. In the Treasury Papers, the petitions and letters of Thomas Pottinger will be found. He claimed from King William's Government some compensation for the losses he had incurred in the revolutionary troubles. His claims were endorsed by officers of rank. He makes no pretensions to family antiquity, but merely says that his ancestor was the first who traded from Belfast to foreign and distant ports. He pleads poverty, which is corroborated by a person in Dr. Kirkpatrick's work of *Presbyterian Loyalty*, wherein it is said that, though the town condemned his conduct in accepting the Sovereignty, his age and the respectable connections he had in Belfast caused him to be pitied. He was a Presbyterian, and a house in High Street, near Skipper Street, has been pointed out to us as that in which he lived. This tradition, to say the least, is very doubtful. Beginning now with this Thomas Pottinger, the family history since is tolerably clear, and is as follows:—

Thomas Pottinger died in 1715, as stated in the Presbyterian Funeral Register. The next Pottinger was Joseph, probably son of the preceding. He married Lady Grace Cochrane, daughter of the Earl of Dundonald. His son was Thomas Pottinger of Mount Pottinger, County Down, living in that place in 1749, as appears by an advertisement in the *News-*

*Letter* of that year, letting a farm of fifteen acres in Ballymacarrett to James Biggar for £13 13s. per annum for a very long term. In 1752, he married Frances, daughter of Eldred Curwen of Cumberland, and had issue Eldred Curwen, his heir. The said Eldred Curwen married, in 1779, Ann, daughter of Robert Gordon of Florida, and died in 1814. His sons were Thomas, Henry, William, and C. J. Fox Pottinger. The sons of Thomas have been noted for their achievements in war in India; Henry was created a Baronet for his talents as a diplomatist and his successful negotiations with the Chinese Government. The late General Pottinger was son of the last named Thomas. Captain Pottinger, one of the grandsons of Thomas, married Miss Casement of Ballymena. The relationship of this family to Belfast is now entirely extinct.

A well-informed correspondent further states that Sir Henry Pottinger was educated at the Belfast Academy, but a strong predilection for the navy led to his going to sea while yet very young. In 1801, he made a voyage as midshipman; in 1803, he went to India, having, through Lord Castlereagh, procured an appointment in the naval service there. The mother of Sir Henry was nearly related to that knightly soldier, Sir Rollo Gillespie, whose monument is to be seen in the square in Comber, County Down.

MR. HENRY JOY.—The well-known and esteemed Henry Joy was a grandson or great-grandson of Francis, who commenced the *News-Letter*, and a cousin of the Chief Baron. He himself succeeded to the newspaper property in early life. He was a man of very considerable acquirements, and wrote many valuable papers in the *News-Letter*, which paper he disposed of in 1797. He was the only person whom we have ever known who was really acquainted with the history of old Belfast. He first compiled a work called *Belfast Politics*, which was republished in 1818 by Mr. John Lawless. He also compiled *Historical Collections relative to the Town of Belfast*. This latter was published in 1817, is an extremely valuable historical publication, and now a very rare one. He never put his name to these works, but

there was no one else in Belfast at the time qualified to write them.

He was also the author, in conjunction with the Rev. Dr. Bruce, of a series of eloquent and highly argumentative letters, bringing prominently before his Irish fellow-countrymen the excellences of the British Constitution, at a time when loyalty to it was less common than at present.

Mr. Joy had five sons. The eldest, Robert, died at Glasgow College in 1813. Dr. William Bruce Joy of London has been a large contributor to medical literature. Henry Holmes Joy, Q.C., died in 1875. Frederick Joy, Solicitor, died in Belfast in 1853; and the Rev. John Holmes Joy is now living at Tunbridge Wells, County Kent.

Mr. Joy died in 1835. The family possesses much property in and around the town, and the name is thoroughly identified with Belfast from a very early date. We are indebted to Dr. William Bruce Joy of London for portions of the preceding details of this family.

FAMILY OF HOLMES.—We are indebted for the following account of this family chiefly to a near relative of the late John Holmes, whose daughter, Mary Isabella, was married to the last named Henry Joy. “John Holmes was a native of Belfast, and was much respected as a merchant, and subsequently as a banker. Robert Holmes, first cousin of the preceding, was leader on the North-East Circuit, and subsequently Father of the Irish Bar. He was universally acknowledged as one of the ablest advocates of his day; but, in consequence of his sympathy with the Liberal cause, and perhaps also owing to his being Emmet’s brother-in-law, though never himself in any way mixed up with the rebellion, was not offered the high preferment which he so richly merited until late in life, when he consistently declined to accept it.” The name Robert Holmes has been introduced several times in this work, and we think it necessary to state this in our own defence. It has been mentioned frequently by our correspondents, and the omission in any one place might give offence.

JOHN HOLMES HOUSTON, one of the originators of the Belfast Bank, was nephew to the above named John Holmes, whose daughter has kindly furnished the following particulars :—

“The late Mr. John Holmes, who died in Donegall Place in the year 1825, was son of the Mr. John Holmes who lived in Donegall Street in the year 1740, and was married in 1750 to Miss Wilson. His father, whose portrait is in my possession, was born in the end of the 17th, or beginning of the 18th century. Farther back than this I cannot go. My father's aunt was married to a Mr. Houston, and was mother of the late Mr. John Holmes Houston of Orangefield. One of Mr. John Holmes's daughters was married to Mr. Joy, and was mother of the late Mr. Henry Holmes Joy, Q.C., and of Dr. Joy, now living in London. The late Rev. Frederick Holmes, who was a nephew of Mr. John Holmes, and had property at Holywood, left sons, the eldest of whom is the Rev. Cecil H. Holmes, one of the masters at Harrow.”

To the above we have but to remark, that a portrait having been painted of the first Mr. Holmes at the end of the 17th century, or beginning of the 18th, a presumptive proof is thereby given that he was possibly the descendant of Edward Holmes, the Sovereign in 1622, it not being usual to take portraits except of persons of some consideration.

The residence as stated to be in Donegall Street in 1740 is difficult of explanation, as that street, as is explicitly detailed in our first volume, was only shaped out in 1754. The lower part of it was in some form somewhat earlier, and it is only then probably in what we now call a detached house, surrounded with gardens, that Mr. Holmes could have resided. But there was no Exchange, no Brown Linen Hall, no Church, no Meeting House, no Roman Catholic Chapel, and no Poor House in Donegall Street at the time.

The foot of Donegall Street, long after 1740, was an aristocratic neighbourhood, in fact the Donegall Place of its day ; and, as we are informed on the best authority, the first person who opened a place of business in that locality was Mr. William

Johnson, to the great annoyance of the residents in that place.

We may as well state here, that in the list of all the inhabitants of Belfast who paid hearth-money tax in 1666, which included the entire population of any account, and which curious document is published in our first volume, p. 741, there are only two of the name of Homes, Gabriel and James—the name is so spelled in the records.

There was a Mr. Holmes, a curate, we imagine, to Mr. May, who officiated in Belfast about 1809 or 1810, but he was no relative, we are informed, to the old Holmes family of Belfast. He lived in Church Street, was a very efficient clergyman, was afterwards Incumbent of Holywood, and wrote an excellent history and statistical account of that parish, which is published in Mr. Shaw Mason's *Account of the Parishes of Ireland*, vol. iii., p. 183.

THE TOMB FAMILY.—David Tomb, married to a sister of Chief Baron Joy, was long connected with the well-known and very successful house of Bateson in Belfast, and acquired considerable property in the neighbourhood.

He was father of the late Henry Joy Tomb, merchant in Belfast, and of that very able lawyer and estimable man, George Tomb, Q.C., long assistant-barrister in County Wicklow. This most respectable name is probably one of the very oldest in Belfast. It was spelled Tom or Thom in the seventeenth century. They were concerned in the little doings of that age; but the identity of the names, though probable, is not purely conjectural on the part of the writer. Henry Joy Tomb and Counsellor Tomb were brothers to the first wife of the Rev. Dr. Drummond, Belfast.

THE BATESON FAMILY.—In the too short biography of the Tomb family just preceding, the name of Bateson is introduced in a commercial relation. Many of the present inhabitants of Belfast are unacquainted with the fact that the high family of Bateson of Belvoir Park was originally a commercial family belonging to this town. The first Bank ever established in



Belfast was in 1752 (see Vol. I., p. 465). This Bank had three partners, of which Thomas Bateson was the third. The name appears subsequently to advertisements offering for sale large quantities of West India produce; and Mr. Robert Bateson, the son of the first possessor, certainly resided at Orangefield in the year 1809. They appear never to have mixed themselves up in any way or at any time with the political events of the day. They were in reality a family of aristocratic origin, having first come to this place from Lancaster, at an early period of the eighteenth century, probably on a commercial venture. Belfast was then becoming known as a rising place.

The year of his coming to Ireland is not named, but he got Orangefield, and married into the White family of White Hall, County Antrim, in 1747. He died in 1791, and was succeeded by his eldest son, Thomas, who was born in 1752, and succeeded to the estates and title of his father, who had been created a Baronet, in 1818.

So far the printed pedigree, all proving a good origin. The Belfast and County Down history of the Bateson family alone calls for notice here. The first of them who got footing in Belfast, therefore, was Thomas, the banker of 1752. He bought Orangefield at or about that time, and, as appears from the early newspapers of the day, obtained also the Moira estate.

The printed record directly states that Mr. Bateson sold his property at Lancaster, and bought these valuable estates in the County Down, most probably between the years 1740 and 1750.

The Bateson family came to Belfast, bringing with them wealth and honourable distinction. This has continued to the present day, Sir Thomas Bateson, Baronet, of Belvoir Park, only two miles from the town, being the direct descendant of the banker and merchant of 1752, who was before that time a gentleman of landed property.

SAMUEL HYDE.—The name of Samuel Hyde is second on the list of subscribers, in the year 1740 (see Vol. I., p. 480), to a petition of the merchants of Belfast to the Government of that



day respecting the condition of the dock of the town. He died at his house in Castle Place.

According to Sir Bernard Burke (see Sir Bernard Burke's *Landed Gentry*), the Hydes were of aristocratic lineage, but no account is given under what circumstances a branch established itself here. It is curious how little is known of Mr. Hyde's history in Belfast. The most important point connected with it is that he had three daughters, one of whom was married to Captain Batt, another to Thomas Gregg, and the third to Waddell Cunningham, all which merely proves the relationship between these three important Belfast families of a former age. Unconnected notices of the Hyde family frequently occur, but not being consecutive, or in any way distinctive, are of no account. We publish one as under.

Mr. Samuel Hyde married, in 1764, Miss Peggy Hamilton of Ballymenock. He was<sup>s</sup> born in 1727, and was doubtless a son of the first Samuel Hyde of Lancashire. John Hyde was active in the eighteenth century in all public matters connected with the town. He was a partner with Mr. Legg in the Rosemary Street Sugar House.

The Hyde family was much connected with the north of England, and the name seems to be now unknown in this town. (The foregoing information was furnished by A. P. Gregg, Esq.)

THE SINCLAIRE FAMILY.—Whether we consider the consistent political opinions or their high standing in commerce, the Sinclaire family must be deemed one of the most important in Belfast. What Belfast man of any lengthened residence in it, or much acquaintance with its inhabitants, does not remember the late John Sinclaire, who died so lately as the year 1857, at the great age of ninety-four years; one of the first volunteers of the 18th century, and certainly the last of that patriotic body, retaining to the end the liberal opinions of his youth, and living to see them recognised and accepted by the most eminent persons of a later day of all shades of political opinion? Who did not know him, the generous-minded old man, and the ardent

lover of field sports, the historic "Draper" of 1797—in truth and in fact, John Sinclair of Belfast? We had heard often of the antiquity of this family in Belfast, but find it dates back no further than the early part of the last century. They are, like many other Belfast people, of Scotch origin. A genealogical memoir of the Sinclaires has been submitted to us, but it is apparently that of the several members of the family mingled together; the births and deaths of numerous children, all baptised by the Rev. Thomas Drennan, and the deaths of many adults, are mentioned, but it is impossible to make out from the details any clear or consecutive narrative. This, however, in the present case, is the less to be regretted, as the following clear and succinct account of the family, furnished by Mr. Richard Sinclair, the only son of John Sinclair now living in this country, is presented to the reader without further preface:—

"The late Thomas Sinclair of Mill Street (born 1719) came into Belfast from Newtownards, and served his apprenticeship with Robert Armstrong, a grocer in High Street. He married, in 1749, Hester Eccles Pottinger, and they lived for some years in High Street, until after the death of Thomas Sinclair's brother John, when they removed to the house in Mill Street, where John had carried on the linen business, and which Thomas continued, having three bleach-greens—viz., The Mountain Green, Lodge Green, and Falls Green. He was a man who took much interest in Irish affairs, especially the volunteer movement, and all matters in connection with the general trade and welfare of Ireland. He kept a very large establishment, and entertained all the prominent men of the last century—among others, Hamilton Rowan, who was a frequent guest. He died in 1798, and was buried in the ground attached to the present St. George's Church, High Street. He left four sons—first, Thomas; second, William; third, John; fourth, George. Neither of the first two left male issue; John left four sons; two are still alive, William and Richard. George left three sons, all of whom are dead."

Though the marriage between the Sinclair and Pottinger

families is not mentioned in any printed biographies which we have seen, it is nevertheless correct.

The Mrs. Sinclaire here mentioned was grandmother of Mr. Richard Sinclaire of Avoca Park, Falls Road, the writer of this short memoir, and mother of Thomas, William, and John.

To this we have only to add a few particulars from our own knowledge.

The Sinclaires were a Presbyterian family, the name of Mrs. Sinclaire appearing on the roll of Dr. Bruce's congregation, 1813, her husband William having died a few years before; she had been a Miss Pollock. One of her daughters was married to the Rev. Edward May, Rector of Belfast; another to Mr. Dobbs of Castle Dobbs; and a third to Archdeacon Butson of Clonfert. The residence of William Sinclaire was in Donegall Place, the great establishment of the Messrs. Lindsay now occupying its site. He owned Fortwilliam also, on the Shore Road, which he occupied only as a summer residence. John Sinclaire also lived in Donegall Place, his house having been where the establishment of Campbell & Co. now is; but the house in Mill Street, with its splendid gardens, was the historic home of the Sinclaire family. It was noticed, in an earlier part of this work, as a curious topographical fact, that a house with great gardens and pleasant surroundings should have been in Mill Street so lately even as the year 1800, and also that it, in a changed condition, still stands! The historic home of the Sinclaires is exactly opposite King Street. It is of great size, the front part being now a large drug and grocery establishment. Where the great gardens were, extending to the river, is now a tan-yard. There were formerly iron railings before the house, which was occupied in this century by Mr. Boomer, one of the largest cotton spinners in the town. In its old days it was a place of great hospitality, and the general resort of all the leading politicians of the time. There is a tradition about it, of very doubtful authority, that the "Hearts of Steel" men, when passing it in 1770, we may suppose to set "Cunningham's house in a flame," cheered loudly, from a belief that the Sinclaire

family sympathised with them in their lawless proceedings, which is not likely. The glory of the Sinclaire mansion has passed away for ever.

WADDELL CUNNINGHAM.—This patriotic and enterprising citizen, though not of this century, must find a place here, as his name is yet well known in the town, and deserves more than a mere passing notice.

The burning of his house in Belfast by the "Hearts of Steel" in 1770, his spirited attempt in favour of popular election at Carrickfergus, and the part he took at the demonstrations in town in commemoration of the early French Revolution, rendered him a public character of the time of the utmost distinction. The following particulars of his early life and general career have been communicated by Waddell Cunningham Douglas, Esq. of Bellevue, Rostrevor.

"Waddell Cunningham was the youngest son of a large family all now extinct. They lived in the townland of Ballymacilmoye, near Lough Neagh, where the ruins of the family residence still remain. The house and property are in my possession, and let as a farm. He went to New York at an early age, long before the Revolutionary War, where he amassed a large fortune, and returned to settle in Belfast at the age of 30. His death took place in his house at the foot of Hercules Street, and he left his property to his youngest nephew, James Douglas, my father, of whom I am the representative. He married a Miss Hyde, but had no issue.

"His mother's name was Waddell, from which circumstance Mr. Cunningham derived his baptismal name. She was a member of the ancient and respectable family so called, of Islanderry, County Down."

By a letter received from the late Dr. Hume of Crumlin, it appears that the Cunningham family all belonged to the parish of Killead; that in the days of Waddell Cunningham they were highly respectable, and that those of them still remaining there continue to be so. We will give a few extracts from Dr. Hume's letter, which will prove interesting, though

he has stated that he was fifty years too late to obtain personal reminiscences of the subject of this biographical sketch.

“Waddell Cunningham was a member of a very old family in Killead, County Antrim, who had gone to Belfast and commenced business there.

“The Cunningham family was settled at the plantation of Ulster at Ballyclare, in the district of Kilmakevit, and parish of Killead, and the old house of the family, built on the plan of the original Scotch settlers, was standing till about five years ago. That the Cunningham family are old and important in this locality is proved by the fact that, when Cromwell, in 1653, had determined on removing the leading Presbyterians from Ulster to Munster, among those who were mentioned to be removed was William Cunningham of Kilmakevit, ancestor to Waddell Cunningham, the famous Belfast merchant; and again in 1689, when so many persons were attainted by James the Second, Joseph Cunningham, Esq., of Antrim, was one of the number, and, we believe, a connection of the aforesaid Cunningham family, who continued to occupy the old house at Ballyclare, near Lough Neagh, till about fifty years ago.”

These few remarks barely correspond, chiefly in relation to Waddell Cunningham's early emigration to America, with the particulars furnished by his grand-nephew, Mr. Douglas of Rostrevor. In the main, however, the statements are correct.

The following is a contemporary account of the character of Mr. Cunningham, which we believe may be relied on, and which contains the record of his funeral:—

“Died, on Friday, 15th Dec., 1797, in the 68th year of his age, Waddell Cunningham, Esq. Few men have spent a life of more active and ardent exertions. In the course of amassing an extensive fortune, he was continually employing it, as occasion arose, in the most useful manner, and to the most generous purposes. As a relative and a friend, his zealous attachments were without bounds. He hardly failed in any instance to set the first example of munificence, in the place where he lived, by liberal contributions in every case where either charity or



public utility was the object. In a mercantile point of view, this town stands indebted to his enterprising genius for opening new sources to it of beneficial traffic, and to the benevolence of his disposition for bringing forward young men destined to the commercial profession, by his countenance, his credit, and his counsel. In situations where whole families required the assistance of an energetic friend, he was among the first to be looked to for stepping forward in their behalf in acts of the most spirited and disinterested liberality. The poor man and the industrious mechanic may long regret his decease—as the one was sure of relief, the other of employment from him in times the most unfavourable for public or private improvements. His hospitable mansion has been many years open to the various strangers of rank or worth who have visited this place.

“Such traits mark a character valuable in society, while it was a blessing to his numerous relations, as well as to the many individuals and families that experienced the effects of his bounty. His remains were yesterday interred at Newtownbreda, accompanied by the Belfast and Castlereagh Yeoman Cavalry, and the Belfast Yeoman Infantry (of the fourth Company of which he was Captain), with a great concourse of other inhabitants.”

THE GREG FAMILY.—“John Greg, born of a good lineage in Scotland, in the year 1693, came over and settled in Belfast as a merchant. He married a lady whose surname is unknown; she was called Jane, which is not saying much, and he died in the year 1783, aged ninety. He had two sons; the younger one, John, went to the West Indies about the year 1765, and became a West India planter, and died without issue in 1795, leaving his West India property to his two eldest nephews, Thomas and Samuel. The elder son, Thomas, remained at Belfast, became a successful merchant there, and married, in 1742, Elizabeth, the eldest daughter of Samuel Hyde, merchant, Belfast.”

Mr. Thomas Greg declined to accept a Baronetcy in 1783, and, both politically and as a citizen, was in every way distin-



guished. The particulars it is not necessary to enter on here. He speculated far beyond the precincts of Belfast, spent much money in searching for coal and other deposits of mineral wealth in the northern counties of Ireland, and in the purchase of land in America. He was the subject of animosity to the "Hearts of Steel," and, like many others, had his name introduced into the ballads which were written at the time to uphold their cause. One of the verses mentions Mr. Greg thus—

"Donegall all his tenants may plunder and fine,  
And a Greg and base Cunningham aid the design ;  
Then the mischief they breed with such terrible zeal  
They falsely impute to the poor "Hearts of Steel."

This was the Thomas Greg whose name is still remembered in Belfast. Samuel went to England, and founded there a family now of much importance and distinction. The Belfast branch alone concerns us, and is related as follows:—"Thomas, the head of it, was born in 1718, and died in Belfast in 1796. He had a large family: the two elder sons, Thomas and Samuel, emigrated to England; the youngest, Cunningham, called after a well-known Belfast citizen of the last century, Mr. Waddell Cunningham, partner with Mr. Thomas Greg, succeeded his father in Belfast in 1796, and married Miss Gason of Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, in the year 1800; and his son, the present Thomas Greg, married Miss Batt, daughter of Narcissus Batt, Esq., in 1838, and is the owner of much valuable property in Belfast."

MR. JOHN GREGG was a Belfast man, and very well known in the town. He had held the situation of Assistant Clerk in the Irish House of Lords, for which he received £700 a-year, and as all the salaries of the officials of the Irish Parliament were continued for life after the Union, he enjoyed this salary till his death. Mr. Maxwell, in his *History of the Rebellion* (p. 461), states that John Gregg had a pension of £786 a-year for life in consequence of the loss of his office. This was, of course, Irish currency. It was originally obtained for him, his friends allege, by the influence of his father-in-law, Mr. Gorman, who

had previously held it. There were several persons of this name in the town at the beginning of the century, but there is reason to suppose Mr. John Gregg was of an older family than any of the name, at least in Belfast. There is a will in the Record Office in Dublin, of the year 1705, of Nathan Gregg of Belfast, and as this was a family name, one of Mr. John Gregg's sons having been so called, it is reasonable to suppose the testator was Mr. John Gregg's direct ancestor. He was a maltster and grain dealer, and the will indicated, so far as can be judged, that he held a good position at the time. Though Mr. Gregg had several sons, there are no male descendants now of this branch of the Greggs in Belfast. About sixty years ago, in one of those periodical visitations of distress to which we are subject, Dr. Hanna preached a sermon for the benefit of the poor, on which occasion an unknown donor put £1,000 on the plate—two notes of £500 each. Mr. Gregg got the credit of the gift, and it was never contradicted.

The compiler has been favoured with the following three biographies, prepared at his request by a friend; and as their subjects were nearly contemporaneous and connected more or less with each other, they are placed together in the following order:—

THE JONES FAMILY.—Valentine Jones, born in Belfast, A.D. 1711, “an eminent merchant and a gentleman of the first respectability” (see obituary in *Belfast Chronicle*, 27th May, 1805), was descended from a Welsh family, who settled in Ireland in 1640. It is recorded that Valentine Jones, his immediate ancestor, signed the Belfast Tory Address to Queen Anne in 1714 (See *Belfast News-Letter*, 30th November, 1792); and it would appear that in 1730 he was High Sheriff of the County of Antrim. Mr. Jones, the subject of the present biography, was engaged in commerce with the West Indies, in partnership with Mr. Bateson, of Orangefield, the father of the late Sir Robert Bateson, of Belvoir Park, near Belfast. Mr. Jones was also a wine merchant, and his office and stores were in Winecellar Entry, and extended from Rosemary Lane to

High Street, or nearly so. His business connections were spread over the whole of Ulster, and his operations seem to have been as profitable as they were extensive. Mr. Jones married, when only sixteen years of age, Miss Rouchet, then in her fifteenth year, a member of a Huguenot family settled at Lisburn; they were children, and amusing stories are recorded of their infantile manners even after their marriage.

At the advanced age of ninety, Mr. Jones retained all the freshness and vigour of youth; and it was his boast that his eldest son was only seventeen years younger than himself.

It is recorded of him that before his death, at a public ball in the Exchange Rooms, Belfast (now the Belfast Bank), he himself, his son, his grandson, and his great grandson, four Val. Jones's in a direct line, took part in the same *contrè* dance, and that the old man displayed on the occasion unusual vigour and hilarity.

Mr. Jones's children, by Miss Rouchet, were Valentine, Edward, Louis, Jane, who married Mr. John Galt Smith of Belfast, and Mrs. Harrison, a lady of rare beauty, whose portrait is still preserved by the Misses Bruce, The Farm, Belfast.

Mr. Jones married, secondly, a Mrs. Ross, by whom he had two children—Edward, who afterwards took the name of Agnew, and who was known as Edward Jones Agnew, of Kilwaughter Castle, near Larne, in the County of Antrim; and Margaret, who survived her brother, and died unmarried. Mr. Agnew represented the County in the Irish Parliament, and died in 1835. Several other local families were also descended from the Jones family—one now represented by Edward Harris Clarke, Director of the Belfast Banking Company, through his mother. Also, William Todd Jones, formerly M.P. for Lisburn; and the family of the late Mrs. Wray of Rostrevor.

Mr. Jones held a conspicuous position among his fellow-townsmen. His signature was second to the Address and Petition from the merchants, traders, and other principal inhabitants to the King, in November, 1775, on the state of affairs and the

rupture with our American colonies. He was chairman of the meeting at which an Address to Mr. Travers Hartley was agreed to, on the occasion of his return as member for Dublin, in March, 1782.

The same year he signed an Address to the Sovereign of Belfast, expressing approbation of the Dungannon Resolutions, at a meeting of the Delegates from 145 Corps of Ulster Volunteers, on Constitutional and Commercial freedom. In March of the same year he presided at a meeting held to address the Earl of Donegall on his zeal in promoting the Lagan Navigation. He was an active promoter in establishing several public institutions, including the Belfast Linen Hall and the Belfast Charitable Society, to the building funds of both of which he largely contributed. In 1793 he signed an Address to the Sovereign of Belfast on the occasion of the King's birthday. Mr. Jones and his son, Mr. Valentine Jones, jun., were subscribers, in June, 1798, to a fund for the assistance of the Belfast Yeomanry; and in 1799 he signed resolutions approving of the loyal and patriotic declaration of the Belfast Yeomanry Cavalry. Mr. Jones originated the building of the range of houses on the East side of Donegall Place (see Vol. I., p. 550), in one of which, that adjoining the Imperial Hotel, he lived, and died in 1805.

Portraits of Mr. Jones, in different costumes, when he was ninety years of age and quite blind, were painted by Mr. Robinson, an eminent local artist, the same who painted the large picture of "The Volunteer Review in 1804," now in the Harbour Office. He had a great objection to have his likeness taken, but the artist was introduced by stealth into his room, and while he painted, some of the family kept the old gentleman in chat; and so the picture was finished, and was said to be an admirable likeness. The old wig and solid figure gave it a certain resemblance to the traditional likeness of Dr. Johnson, for whose portrait it has been more than once taken by strangers. These portraits are carefully preserved—one is at Kilwaughter Castle, and the others are in possession of Mr.

Samuel Smith, Banker, Liverpool, and Mr. George Kennedy Smith, Meadowbank, Whitehouse, his great-grandsons. Among a number of other family portraits, the latter has one of Miss Rouchet.

The remains of the old patriarch were interred in the Cemetery still known as the New Burying Ground, Belfast, where a monument was erected, still in excellent preservation, with this inscription—"Erected in memory of Mr. Valentine Jones, of the Town of Belfast, Merchant, who lived respected and died lamented by numerous descendants and friends, on the 22nd day of March, 1805, aged 94 years."

Valentine Jones the second married Miss Kitty Moore, by whom he had a son, Valentine, and two daughters; first, Kitty, who was married to Mr. Roger Moore, and died without issue; secondly, Maria, who died unmarried. He spent a great portion of his life in Barbadoes, on leaving which he was presented with a public testimonial, the following inscription on which is the best evidence of his character, viz.:—"In testimony of an affectionate and honourable regard, from the merchants and other principal inhabitants of Bridge Town, Barbadoes, to Valentine Jones, Esq., whose public and private virtues, during a residence of 33 years in that Island, have claimed the applause and esteem of a grateful community. His fellow-citizens, having experienced his steady and disinterested principles as a member of the General Assembly, his assiduity and impartiality as eldest Assistant-Judge of the Common Pleas, the benevolence, candour, and readiness with which he acted as an Arbitrator, and the rectitude wherewith he always supported the eminent character of a merchant, present this to Mrs. Jones, his amiable partner, having parted from him and her with sincere regret, on the first day of July, 1783."

He died at Portpatrick on 26th October, 1808, in his seventy-ninth year, and was interred in the New Burying Ground, Belfast, where a Monument to his memory was erected, bearing this testimony to his worth—"If a fulfilment of the moral and



religious, the relative and social duties of life, constitutes a good man—This was one.”

The third Valentine Jones, son of the preceding, by Kitty Moore, married a Miss Græme, and left two children, Valentine and Elizabeth.

The fourth Valentine Jones, son of the preceding, took the name of Græme, and was known as Col. Val. Jones Græme, of 5th Fusilier Guards. He died without issue, leaving a widow, Mrs. Patience Elizabeth Jones Græme, who died at Bath at an advanced age some few years ago.

Col. Græme's mother and his aunt, Miss Maria Jones, resided at Oldbury Park, near Bristol, and are both deceased.

The only direct descendant on the male side of the Jones family now living, is Mr. William Agnew, of Kilwaughter Castle, Larne, who resides almost constantly in Paris.

THE SMITH FAMILY.—Contemporaries of the Val. Jones's were their friends and connections the Smiths, a well-known and most respected Belfast family. The ancestors of the Smiths are said to have settled in the County of Antrim in the year 1640 ; but the first of the family of whom there is any authentic record preserved were (see Vol. I., p. 426 ; Appendix, 726) David Smith, Sovereign of Belfast in the two years 1698–99, who was disqualified as a burgess in the passing of the Test Act, and his brother, John Smith of Belfast, from whom is traced the following direct genealogy :—

Jack Smith, as he was familiarly known, had seven sons and one daughter. One of the sons, Patrick, left Belfast for Waterford, taking with him two hundred men. He founded a colony there, and established the linen trade, which is still carried on in that part of Ireland. From this Patrick Smith was descended the celebrated barrister, Robert Holmes, long the leading council on the North-East Circuit. He was as remarkable for his eminent success at the Bar as for his honesty and disinterestedness. Early in the present century, owing to reasons of a political nature, he was for a time regarded with disfavour by the Governments of the day ; but it was well



understood that a silk gown was more than once offered to him, and that, had he consented to accept any favour from the Crown, he would have had a seat upon that bench which, by his talents and character, he would have adorned. All promotion, however, of any kind he steadily refused. His marble bust was erected by his brethren in the County Antrim Court House, Belfast.

Another son of Mr. Jack Smith, by name Andrew, was known as a wit. A daughter of his was married to a Mr. Garnet, and had a daughter married to a Mr. Sloan. From these are descended the Sloans of Belfast, bankers. William, another son of Mr. Jack Smith, emigrated to Holland. Dorothy, the only daughter of Mr. Jack Smith, was married to Mr. Dacre Hamilton, of the County Monaghan, whose son, Sir James Hamilton, was High Sheriff of the County in 1786. The Hamiltons are an old Scotch family, and Dacre was grandson of the first settler of that name in Ireland.

Samuel Smith, the second son of Mr. Jack Smith, was born in 1693. His portrait is still in excellent preservation in the collection of his great-grandson, Mr. George K. Smith, Meadowbank, Whitehouse. He appears a fine, portly gentleman, in a rich green velvet ornamental dress—though what that dress represented it is now difficult to ascertain. Samuel Smith was a Presbyterian, and a leading member of the First Congregation, Rosemary Street, Belfast, when the Rev. John M'Bride was minister. It was then that a grant of the ground on which that church was built was obtained from the Donegall family, with whom the minister was a great favourite. Those, however, were perilous times, and, as an instance, this distinguished minister had to fly to Scotland for giving offence to the Government. His congregation were determined that he should return to them, and this object was effected by Mr. Samuel Smith proceeding to Glasgow and bringing back with him his pastor in 1713. Mr. Smith resided in High Street, on a property extending, with its then gardens and play-grounds, to Ann Street, which property is still retained in the family. He was

one of the first promoters of the Belfast Charitable Society in 1752, and his name appears at many of its meetings until shortly before his death. His signature appears to an address from the free and independent inhabitants of the town of Belfast, presented to the Honourable Henry Boyle, Speaker of the House of Commons, February, 1754. He died in 1760, aged sixty-seven years. He married, first, Miss Sarah Boyd, and by her had three daughters, namely—Mrs. Donaldson, Mrs. Mather, and Mrs. Boursiquot, the portraits of the two former being in the collection referred to.

From Mrs. Boursiquot were descended the Orrs and Mc'Naghtens of Dublin, and Miss Rippingham, who died in Belfast, in 1870, in her ninety-first year. Mr. Boucicault, the celebrated actor and author, is also a descendant. Mr. Samuel Smith married, secondly, Miss Ann Galt of Coleraine, and by her had three sons and three daughters. His youngest daughter, Ellen, was married to Mr. James Thomson of Coleraine. From this marriage were descended the late Samuel Smith Thomson, Esq., of Belfast, M.D., and his nephew, James Bristow, Esq., for many years the Director and Manager of the Northern Banking Company in Belfast. Dr. Thomson, who was named after Samuel Smith, and who bore a striking resemblance to the portrait of his grandfather before referred to, rose to the top of his profession as a physician in Belfast, where he was universally known and esteemed. His portly figure, honest and glowing countenance, frank and polished manners and genial hospitality, will not readily be forgotten by his fellow-townsmen. A good amateur musician, a fair classical scholar, a tolerable linguist, and a well-read gentleman, he was formed by nature and education to be an agreeable companion, and his society was consequently sought and esteemed by every class of the community. But it was at his own table that his genial nature expanded itself most fully, and his eminent social qualities were most developed. Dr. Thomson founded the Anacreontic Society of Belfast, and was its president for many years. He took a leading part in the support and management of the charities of

the town ; he was a good public speaker, and was known as a Liberal-Conservative on political questions, and as a steady supporter of the Throne. He was fond of travel, and had visited all the interesting scenery of the United Kingdom, as well as the chief points of attraction on the Continent of Europe. He was altogether a refined and accomplished gentleman ; the excellent qualities of his heart made him a warm friend and generous physician. He was a Presbyterian, under the ministry of Dr. Bruce, Rev. William Bruce, and the Rev. J. Scott Porter, and took a zealous part as a member of the First Presbyterian Church ; besides, he was an ardent advocate of an enlightened system of secular education, and took a prominent part in promoting the fundamental principles of the Belfast Royal Academical Institution. The First Congregation erected a mural tablet in their church to his memory.

James Bristow served his apprenticeship in the counting-house of Mr. Narcissus Batt, and afterwards became the corresponding clerk in the banking-house of Batt, Houston, & Batt, and had thus acquired a general knowledge of banking business. Possessed of excellent natural abilities, a clear judgment, quick apprehension, great diligence, and strict integrity, combined with a manly exterior and popular address, Mr. Bristow rose rapidly in the estimation of his employers and of the public ; and when, in the year 1826, the private banking-house of Orr, M'Cance, Montgomery, & M'Neile became the Northern Banking Company, he was invited to join it as Manager. He assumed his post as such on the opening of the new company, and was soon after made a Director ; and to his abilities and assiduity the Company was largely indebted for much of its popularity and success. Mr. Bristow's banking experience became extensively acknowledged, and he was examined before several Committees of the House of Commons when important questions of currency and finance were the subject of enquiry. The contracted sphere of a provincial town was not calculated to develop the energies of a mind capable of great expansion, but personal and domestic circumstances reconciled Mr. Bristow

to his position, and he remained in it until his death, without ever seeking to make a change. Fond of the retirement and relaxation to be found in the bosom of a large and united family, Mr. Bristow never took a prominent part in public affairs outside the bank, and rarely appeared as a public speaker. In politics he was a Liberal, and in religion a Presbyterian. In private life he was a kind and indulgent husband and father, an affectionate brother and nephew, and an obliging and judicious friend. He purchased the property of Wilmont, near Belfast, a charming site, on which he built a double mansion for the residence of his son and himself, where he died in 1866. Mr. Bristow was married to Jane, daughter of the late Samuel Smith, Balnamore, to whom reference is made hereafter, and he had several children, the eldest of whom was the late highly respected James Thomson Bristow, who was associated with him in the Northern Bank, and who, upon his father's death, became the senior Director of that Company.

Mr. John Galt Smith, the eldest son of the preceding Samuel Smith, was born on 17th May, 1731, and when thirty-four years of age married Jane Jones, the daughter of the first Valentine Jones, and by her had a numerous family. He seems to have taken an active part in public life from an early age, and to have enjoyed the confidence and esteem of his fellow-townsmen. In 1754, he joined in the address signed by his father, presented to the Honourable Henry Boyle. In 1775, he signed an address to the King on the state of affairs, and on the rupture with the American colonies. As lieutenant of the Belfast Volunteer Company, he presided at a meeting of the Company held in March, 1782, at which an address to Travers Hartley, Esq., and the free and independent electors of the City of Dublin, was agreed to, and, as chairman of the meeting, he signed the address. He subsequently joined in a congratulatory address to Mr. Hartley on his election as member for Dublin. In 1782, he was a subscriber of £100 to the fund for the erection of the White Linen Hall in Belfast. In 1790, his name appears as one of the original members of the Northern Whig Club. Mr.

Smith was secretary to a meeting of the Orange Lodge of Belfast, held on the 19th June, 1797, the Right Worshipful James Montgomery, Esq., in the chair. And in 1799, two years before his death, Mr. Smith joined in a declaration, approving of that by the Belfast Yeomanry Cavalry, which was truly loyal and patriotic, and expressed an abhorrence of the rebellion then being carried on by the United Irishmen. Mr. Smith took an active part in promoting the mercantile interests of Belfast, and his name is associated with many projects and companies, including the extensive Roperies extending from Waring Street to Lime Kiln Dock, the Pottery manufacture, &c., &c. He was one of the trustees, named in a second grant in 1767, from Lord Donegall, of the ground on which the First Presbyterian Church had at first been built; he was, besides, treasurer of that ancient worshipping society; and when the old Church was taken down in 1783, and the present beautiful edifice erected, Mr. Smith (as has been stated by the late Dr. Bruce) superintended the laying of every layer of brickwork in the fabric. His last signature to the minutes of the Congregation was on the 4th October, 1801. From the period of the rebuilding until the present time, the same pew has been occupied successively by a John Galt Smith (four generations), a fact commemorated in a Memorial Window lately erected in the Church by Mr. George Kennedy Smith. The time above referred to (1783) was remarkable for the erection of many new churches and buildings in Belfast, which possessed a population then of only 13,000. In the promotion of the Charitable Society, Mr. Smith zealously co-operated with his father, acting as treasurer for many years, and continuing his services until the close of his life in 1802. His portrait is in the collection of paintings at Meadowbank.

Mr. John Galt Smith had a numerous family, of whom three died young. Two of his daughters, Margaret and Charlotte, lived in Donegall Square, and died unmarried at advanced ages. The eldest son, Samuel, was a linen bleacher, and resided at Woodville, near Belfast. He was born in 1766, and married, in 1794, Letitia Bradish, of Kilkenny, and had eleven children, of



whom the only survivors now are Edward Jones Agnew Smith, residing in New South Wales; Samuel Smith, the Manager of the Bank of Liverpool; and Mrs. James Stevenson of Downpatrick. Mr. Smith served his time in the counting-house of Messrs. John S. Ferguson & Co., of the White Linen Hall, and subsequently became the owner of the celebrated White Rock Green, where he carried on the bleaching business with success until the close of the French War in 1815, after which he purchased the lands and mills of Balnamore, Ballymoney, from his brother-in-law, Mr. Josiah Bryan, and went to reside there in 1818. That property was re-purchased several years ago by the late Mr. J. T. Bryan, and is still in possession of the family. Mr. Smith was a member of the Belfast Yeomanry Cavalry, and his name is appended as lieutenant to the loyal and patriotic declaration of that troop issued on 18th June, 1798; his brothers, John Galt Smith, jun., and Edward Jones Smith, signing the same declaration as privates. Assisted by his amiable and excellent wife, than whom a lady of greater personal attractions, more fascinating manners, and more accomplished mind is rarely to be met with, he gave to all his children a good education, adapted to the sphere of active industry to which they were likely to be called. Ardent and impulsive, but at the same time methodical and persevering, he won the confidence of his neighbours by his untiring industry, manly independence, and cordial manners. Occupying a large farm, he introduced many improvements into the somewhat rude and primitive husbandry of the district. He first established Sunday Schools in the parish. Although a Presbyterian, he lived on intimate terms of friendship with the estimable curate, on whom devolved the entire duty of a most extensive parish, the rector being non-resident. He thus lived, esteemed by the wealthy and beloved by the poor, until his death took place in 1829. His eldest son, John Galt Smith (3) died in Australia many years ago. His fourth son, the late Rev. William Smith, F.L.S., was a distinguished naturalist and microscopist, and his *Synopsis of the British Diatomaceæ*, published in 1853-56, is a very elaborate



and highly-prized work. In the latter years of his life he was Professor of Natural History in Queen's College, Cork.

Valentine, second son of John Galt Smith, died young.

John Galt (2), third son of John Galt Smith, was born on 23rd March, 1770, and died on 9th February, 1832. Having a desire to see the world, he devoted the earlier portion of his life to the sea. A few years prior to his father's death, he returned home and became his partner. He married Miss Margaret Barber, by whom he had a family of fourteen children. She was the youngest daughter of the Rev. Samuel Barber, Presbyterian minister of Rathfriland, and a descendant of the Rev. Gilbert Kennedy (*secundus*) referred to in the next biography. Mrs. Smith was forty-three years a widow, and died at Meadowbank, Whitehouse, on 21st May, 1875, in the ninety-third year of her age. The funeral sermon was preached by her beloved pastor, the Rev. J. Scott Porter, and was printed for private circulation, from which the following quotations are taken:—"There have been many women of more extensive acquirements; many of more brilliant intellectual endowments; several of more fascinating conversation and attractive manners; but for sound sterling sense, for genuine sympathy in which reliance could be placed unhesitatingly, whether its manifestation were called forth by sorrow or by joy; for warmth of affection and kindness of heart to all, whether high or low, who came within her knowledge or the sphere of her influence; for deep-seated piety and comprehensive charity, she had, and she could have, no superior." . . . "May we all be enabled to take pattern from the meek and gentle graces which she was privileged to manifest, that our latter end may be like hers. For myself, I can utter no better wish than that my soul may be with Margaret Smith." Mr. John Galt Smith (4), for many years Secretary of the Ulster Railway, was the eldest son of John Galt Smith (*secundus*), and he died, universally respected, in 1872, aged sixty-three years. The sole survivor of the family is Mr. George Kennedy Smith, solicitor, to whom reference is made in Vol. I., p. 426, as the Hon. Secretary of the First

Presbyterian Church, Belfast. In recognition of this gentleman's official services for upwards of 40 years, his fellow-worshippers are about to present him with his Portrait, from the easel of Sir Thomas Alfred Jones, President of the Royal Hibernian Academy.

William, the fourth son of John Galt Smith (*primus*), was a West India merchant, and married in the West Indies a Miss Wentworth. The only fruit of this marriage was a daughter, Jane, who, in 1822, was married to Professor the Rev. William Bruce of The Farm, for upwards of fifty years one of the pastors of the First Presbyterian Church, Belfast, a minister greatly beloved by his congregation, and a man highly respected by all classes of the community.

The remaining son, Edward Jones Smith, was in the linen business; he married Miss Crawford, the daughter of the Belfast banker of that name. Their three sons are now all deceased. His youngest son, John Galt Smith (5), left a widow and two children, who reside at Southampton.

Mary Ann, the daughter of Mr. John Galt Smith (*primus*), married Mr. Josiah Bryan, and had three sons and two daughters, all of whom are now deceased.

The eldest son of Samuel Smith, second son of John Galt Smith (*secundus*), who died at Newry in 1849, is now the only member bearing the family name of John Galt Smith.

THE KENNEDY FAMILY.—Mr. James Trail Kennedy, a wealthy merchant of Belfast, and a highly accomplished gentleman, was born 8th April, 1751, and died 28th August, 1832.

The Kennedys, who are descendants of the noble family of Cassilis, in Scotland, made their first appearance in Ireland during the middle of the seventeenth century. Rev. Gilbert Kennedy, minister of Girvan, who was married to a Miss Montgomery, the great grand-daughter of the Marquis of Huntly, fled from Scotland from the persecutions in the reign of Charles the Second, and took refuge in Ireland, accompanied by his brother Thomas, also a minister. Gilbert concealed himself near Comber, County Down. Thomas settled in County

Tyrone, where his descendants are respectable and numerous. During the administration of Strafford, the Presbyterians of Ireland were almost as ill-treated as those of Scotland, so that Gilbert had still great hardships to contend with. He preached in the Glens near Comber, in the starlight; and as soldiers were quartered in many of the houses, the people had to leave home after the soldiers were asleep, and return before they were up next morning. They carried their children from Lisburn and all the surrounding country to be baptised by him. In 1670, Bishop Leslie paid a visit to Boyle, Bishop of Down, and urged him to use his power, which he did presently, in a very vigorous manner, by summoning twelve of the ministers of Down to his Court, and going on with excommunication against them. Among these were Gilbert Kennedy and Michael Bruce, the latter of whom had but lately returned to his parish after sufferings and long imprisonment in Scotland. Through the interference of the Primate, this new intended persecution fell to the ground. The difficulties and discouragements that the early Presbyterian Fathers in their settlement in Ulster had to encounter were gradually disappearing, a brighter era was at hand, the Prince of Orange had ascended the throne, and the dismal die of persecution was about to be obliterated. Gilbert Kennedy was minister of Comber, Dundonald, and Holywood until his death, and his remains were interred in the aisle of Dundonald Church, where his name still appears upon his tomb.

Gilbert, son of Gilbert (primus), was minister of Tullylish, where he was greatly beloved, and continued that ministry until his death in 1745. He was married to a Miss Laing.

An engraved portrait of Gilbert, son of Gilbert (secundus), is still preserved in the houses of many of his descendants, bearing the following epigraph, viz. :—" Gilbertus Kennedy, A.M., V.D.M., Qui Hominis et Civis Officia et Varia Past<sup>s</sup>. Evang<sup>i</sup>. munia Apud. LISBURN, Ann I. ; apud. KILLILEAGH, Annos XI. ; apud. BELFAST, Annos XXIX., Summa Prudentia et Integritate absolvit Moribusq. Puris Ornavit Ex hac vita decessit Maii

12mo. 1773. *Ætatis suæ* 67." Gilbert (tertius) was married to a Miss Trail of Marybrook, County Down, and was minister of the Second Presbyterian Church prior to the edifice being rebuilt in 1792. There is a monument to his memory in the New Burying Ground, Clifton Street, Belfast.

The descendants of "The Three Gilberts," a term familiarly known in family history, are to be found in the families of Andrews, Comber; Bailie (Colonel), Bankhead, J. B.; Barber (Rev. Samuel), Rathfriland; Boursiquot; Burdett (Sir William); Clements (Major), Cherry (Rev. George), Clare, County Armagh; Crawford, Monaghan; Glenney, Newry; Home; Hyndman, Belfast; Labourtouche Laing (Rev. George), Newry; Kennedy (Rev. Andrew), Mourne; Kennedy (Rev. George), Lisburn; Kennedy, Summer Hill, Dublin; Kennedy (Major), Lisburn; Kennedy, Bailie (Dr.). F.T.C.D.; Malcom (Rev. James), Hill Hall; Malcom (Rev. Dr. A. G.), Newry; Moody (Rev. James), Newry; M'Tear, Belfast; Quinn, Newry; Reynette (Sir James), Shaw; Simpson; Sloan; Smith, Belfast, represented by George Kennedy Smith, Solicitor; Smyth, Dundalk, represented by Rev. George Kennedy Smyth, Cork; Taylor, Vesey (General), Williamson, Wilson.

James Trail Kennedy, the subject of the present memoir, was the son of the Rev. Gilbert Kennedy (tertius), of Belfast. His early life was devoted to the business of a wine merchant, which he carried on in those extensive stores in Rosemary Street and Legg's Lane, that were lately removed for the present buildings in Lombard Street, and in which he acquired a fame and a fortune. He was of the roll of merchants that raised Belfast to a high mercantile standard, and was justly esteemed as one of the best of merchants. He was unostentatious in his manner, charitable in all his acts, and had a highly cultivated mind. His latter life was spent at the beautiful mansion and demesne of Annadale, Newtownbreda, pursuing his literary tastes, and exemplifying the best traits of a country gentleman. He was married to a Miss Isabella Byron, and had several children, all of whom died in his lifetime, excepting one daughter, Elizabeth,

a girl of rare beauty, but, like the other children, of great delicacy. Mrs. Kennedy and Miss Kennedy resided on the Continent of Europe for many years until her daughter's health was restored. During that sojourn, attentions had been paid to "the Fairest of the Fair" by a Mr. Bomford, a gentleman possessing large estates in Ireland, who became the first husband of Miss Kennedy. Some years after the death of her first husband, Mrs. Bomford married the present Primate, Archbishop Beresford, of Armagh, but died in 1870, without issue by either marriage.

As stated above, Mr. Kennedy died in 1832, and his remains were interred in the family burial-place in the New Burying Ground in Clifton Street, Belfast.

THE FAMILY OF LEGG.—In our former volume there were some notices of the family of Legg of Malone, in an attempt to prove their very early settlement in that locality. It has not been deemed satisfactory. Some contrary to this have affirmed that the first Legg that settled in Malone was one of those introduced by Sir Arthur Chichester at the beginning of the 17th century. But there is not any proof of this, and without documentary evidence, vague statements are of no avail to establish pedigrees. Others, again, affirm that the first settler of the name of Legg that got possession of property in Malone had been an officer in King William's army; and it is an unquestioned fact that, at or immediately after the Revolution, a contemporary Will explicitly mentions his residence at that place and at that time. This alone is evidence, and we can go no further; all beyond is conjectural.

The colony as mentioned by the traveller Brereton certainly existed in 1634, and, so far as we can tell, no names are given either of Legg or any other, but they were bound together by relationship and a common country. But neither from that time nor the more recent era of the Revolution has any continuous history of them been laid before us, and we fear, in consequence, that all about the Stewarts, Leggs, and others will be deemed meagre and imperfect. The modern Leggs, however,



interest us now, and even of them a regular genealogy has not been procured in some instances, but what we have, with some collateral matters, we now lay before the reader with this apology for its manifest defectiveness.

Benjamin Legg was a Belfast merchant and sugar refiner in the 18th century. He died about the middle of that century, and unbounded praises were bestowed upon him for the great improvements he had made in the sugar refining trade. His place of business was, it may be conjectured, at Legg's Lane, where Lombard Street now is; and the Sugar House which was in Rosemary Street, near the corner of North Street, was probably that in which these improvements were effected. At the same time, it may be mentioned that there was another Sugar House in a lane adjoining, incidentally alluded to as the place where the country Volunteers were housed, when flocking into the town to be reviewed, in the days of that old domestic army.

We do not know whether the above Benjamin ever lived on his property in Malone or not. He was son of William, who died in 1721 or 1723; but shortly after the Revolution, there was undoubtedly a Mr. Legg of Malone, presumably living at their present locality.

A descendant of this family succeeded to the property, and was High Sheriff of the County of Antrim in 1772, and died in 1777. His heir was William, who was also High Sheriff of Antrim, and, after passing a long and useful life, died in 1821.

Eleanor, his sister, was married to Hill Wallace, Esq., and had issue William Wallace Legg, who lived at Malone, and will yet be remembered by many in Belfast.

From some unknown cause, there is not now one of the family of Legg living at Malone, the place being let for a limited term of years. It is an exceedingly valuable property, extending in the direction of Belfast, and containing 700 acres, held in perpetuity, at about 5s. per acre, under the Disentailing Deed. Nor is there any member of the family, so far as we know, in



trade in the town, though in the last century they had a place of business where the old Bank Buildings now are.

Benjamin Legg left a large family, and apparently much wealth. His will is a most lengthy document, not necessary to quote. One of his daughters was married to Robert Thompson; another, to James Templeton. The family continued the trade for a time in Belfast, for their mutual benefit. To his son, William Legg, he left the leases of his Malone property when he would reach the age of 24 years.

The following clauses in Benjamin Legg's will are suggestive:—

“A tenement in Rosemary Lane and in North Street, with the fields belonging thereto, are said to be the property of the firm of Legg, Hyde, & Co. A property in Bridge Street, where the said Benjamin Legg resided, with a Lease of the Bleach Yard at Strandmillis, which the said Benjamin died possessed of.”

The particulars connected with these dispositions are not entered into, but merely the words describing certain localities.

William Legg, the son of Benjamin, would appear to have been the member of the family who succeeded to the Malone property, and who was the owner thereof till 1821, as already noticed.

It is much to be regretted that it is impossible to enter into particulars in the case of the Legg family, or to go into the collateral relations, which are very numerous.

The preceding biography is far from being so clear as we could desire, but the fact is, the details furnished to us regarding this family were so copious, that we found it extremely difficult to give even a brief outline of some of the persons referred to by our correspondents.

It will, of course, be also understood that the various inter-marriages, as expressed in the Stewart and Legg papers, are on the authority of the writers of the same.

Among many papers connected with the Stewart and Wilson families submitted to us by Dr. Templeton, the following are

selected as examples or traits of the customs of the time. The paper is wanting in one particular—it has no date.

“Miss Ann Wilson, of Croglin, Dumfriesshire, having occasion to visit Dublin, rode on horseback from Donaghadee to the Bell Inn at Drumbridge, with the intention of remaining there all night; but not finding room, the landlady said she would find accommodations for her at Ballydrain, as the master of the house was then from home. He returned the next day when the lady was leaving, and was so much struck with her appearance, that he followed her to Dublin and married her. Their granddaughter or great-granddaughter, Miss Stewart of Windsor, sent to Scotland for the Wilsons remaining there to visit her, which they did, and Miss Ann Wilson was married to Mr. John Thompson of Jennymount, and her brother Walter married Miss Stewart of Ballydrain.”

“In 1675 there was a Free House at Ballydrain for poor travellers to lodge and get their food in; and we still have a stone which had been built into the wall of this house, with the letters—‘A Free House, 1675.’”

THE MARTIN FAMILY.—The head of this family was a Belfast merchant, and one of the most just and honourable that it ever contained. His descendants have been amongst the largest donors that Belfast has had to its charitable institutions. The following brief account has been communicated by a connection of the Martin family.

“All I can contribute to the Martin Chronicles is as follows, viz., that the firm of John Martin & Co. dates back to the beginning of the present century.

“The head of this house (if not the founder) was John Martin, sen., who died in 1843 or thereabouts, at the age of eighty years, in Donegall Square East. He lived at one time in Church Lane, where he carried on business as a wholesale grocer, and was popularly known as ‘honest John Martin,’ in consequence of having paid up all his creditors in full, with interest from date of his failure.

“He ultimately made a handsome fortune for those times,

and went to reside at Connsbrook House, at the foot of Bunker's Hill—if he did not build it. His son, the late John Martin, who died in 1876, was born in Church Lane, went out to America when a young man, and got married there, I believe, and soon returned, and went to reside at Killyleagh about 1823 or 1825, where he built a cotton-mill and factory, which he carried on for some years, till it was burnt to the ground in 1845, when he had a flax-spinning mill built in its stead. His son Samuel, who carried on the business of John Martin & Co. in Ann Street, Belfast, was the founder of the Children's Hospital and donor of the Throne Lands, but, dying in 1872, before all matters in connection with this charity were completed, his father carried out everything according to his son's intentions.

“The cost of the entire buildings and the value of the lands cannot have been less than £16,000.”

MR. JOHN BROWN had been Sovereign of Belfast several times, and died in office, in 1801, aged fifty years. It is also stated that he had been Sheriff of the County Antrim; and he was reputed, at the time of his death, to be the richest man, or at least one of the richest men, in Belfast. He was buried at Newtownbreda, the great assemblage which followed his remains to that place attesting the respect in which he was held. So changed is Belfast, so changed are the manners and customs of it, that the residence of this important Sovereign was on Peter's Hill. The house still stands, or what we believe to be the house—a large old-fashioned structure at the corner of Brown's Square, which was so called after Mr. Brown himself. His eldest son, the Rev. John Brown, was afterwards a most popular Episcopalian minister in the town, but, having had some misunderstanding with the Donegall family or with Mr. Macartney, he retired from that office, and went to Scotland. We have seen him walking through the streets on the Sunday, attired in his academic gown, to celebrate the morning service in St. Anne's Church.

The advertisement for the sale of some of the property in this

place thus describes, no doubt correctly, what it was nearly eighty years ago :—

“To be Let, the House, Yard, Grounds, and Gardens of the late Mr. Brown, on Peter’s Hill. The Grounds are extensive, with a meadow at the rere.”

It must, therefore, have been a pleasant country residence.

The Romance of the Aristocracy has been written, showing in broad and bright colours “the chances and changes of this mortal life.” The Romance of the Poor House might also afford materials for a small volume, giving an account of the vicissitudes of families once amongst the most prominent of the citizens of our town; but a word to the wise is sufficient.

THE MULHOLLAND FAMILY.—There were several families of this name in the town at the end of the last century, but the one which has risen to a very high degree of worldly distinction, and to whom Belfast is probably more indebted than to any other for its recent unexampled progress, was that of Thomas Mulholland, who carried on a very small business in 1804, and probably many years previously.

This Thomas died in the year 1821, and his wife Anne, at the great age of 92, in 1858. They had many children: two of them, Thomas and William, are interred with them in their family burying place in the New Burying Ground; their two other sons, Andrew and Sinclair Kelburn, both long since dead, have no doubt been interred near the country houses which they owned at the time of their decease.

A very good way of learning the *status* or means of any family is obtainable by discovering the schools at which their children were receiving their education. Guided by this principle, and looking at the list of prize-winners at the Belfast Academy, the highest and most expensive school in the town, and that always attended by the better classes, there are found three of the name of Mulholland—Andrew, Sinclair K., and William; all in that list as published in the papers twice annually, after the half-yearly examinations. There was also at this school T. M'Donnell, afterwards the eminent Queen’s Counsel, who died

only at the end of 1878. He was a native of Belfast, and his sister was married to Mr. Andrew Mulholland, father of the present John Mulholland, Esq., M.P.

We likewise happen to know of a certainty that, subsequently, Sinclair Kelburn Mulholland, as he was then called—which Christian name proves the Presbyterianism of the family at the period of his birth, learned French with Monsieur Durand, the old Royalist native of France, in 1809 or 1810, who was considered then a high-class teacher, and whose school was opposite the Church in Donegall Street. He had under his care many of the respectable boys of the town. These were the Mulholland lads in their very youthful days, who afterwards became the great spinners and manufacturers of Belfast. Andrew and Sinclair were the best known. Both were carrying on business in the town, and resided in it or near it. Andrew afterwards purchased an estate in the County of Down, and built on it one of the most magnificent mansions in that county. His son, member of Parliament for Downpatrick, and owner of the estate around that town, succeeded, and is now living at Ballywalter Park, in the Ards, County of Down, is proprietor of large estates in that county, and doubtless still possessed of much interest in great establishments in Belfast. This family is one of the most remarkable instances that have ever occurred in Belfast, illustrating the success that may be attained by real talent and integrity of character. It is well known Mr. Andrew Mulholland made a free gift of the great organ which is in the Ulster Hall, and Mr. Sinclair Mulholland built a large wing to the General Hospital. Much of their success, we believe, can be fairly traced to Mrs. Anne Mulholland, the mother of Andrew and Sinclair.

THE EKENHEAD FAMILY.—The Ekenhead family belonged originally to Lisburn, and is introduced here, not so much by reason of any trading importance or otherwise which they reached, as for some collateral matters which have made the name rather noted. At the same time, Mr. Thomas Ekenhead of Belfast was extensive in business, and acquired much wealth.

He was the principal rope-maker of the town, and supplied the greater number of Belfast ships with cordage before the introduction of steam navigation. His brother, a Lieutenant in the army, was the Lieutenant Ekenhead who swam across the Hellespont in May, 1810, with Lord Byron; which fact, and all the circumstances connected therewith, will be found in the life of the noble poet. Thomas Ekenhead died of cholera on its first outbreak in this country in 1832, and his brother has also been long dead. They had one sister, Mrs. Dummett, who lived to a great age, and died so recently as the year 1879. She had much property, a great deal of which she left for charitable purposes. She had built a Presbyterian Church in Belfast some years ago, and bequeathed to it at her death an endowment of £3,000, a very noble act. This church is opposite the old Poor House of Belfast, not a very suitable situation, we imagine, for a church of private erection, and so richly endowed. She also left £1,000, interest thereof to found a scholarship in Trinity College for ever, open only to youths from the County Antrim.

THE M'CLEAN FAMILY.—This family, between sixty and seventy years ago, was remarkably well known in the town of Belfast. There were five brothers, all in trade. The oldest was, we believe, Mr. Adam M'Clean, who had a large cloth shop in High Street, near that now occupied by Mr. John G. M'Gee. He had five sons; the only one of the number who came to any distinction was Samuel John, who rose to be a Fellow of Trinity College. These sons are now all dead. The elder, Adam M'Clean, was the possessor of St. Patrick's Bell, which was disposed of to the Royal Irish Academy, and is now one of the most prized and valuable relics in that great collection. This should be interesting to Belfast people as a sort of town relic, and its history is briefly this:—The money value of St. Patrick's Bell is worth noting. According to Dr. Reeves, it was sold by Mr. M'Clean's executors to Dr. Todd, the learned author of the "Life of St. Patrick," for £150. After Dr. Todd's death, it was sold by his executors in their turn to the Royal



Irish Academy for £500. Dr. Todd, when he was the owner, lent it for exhibition to several associations—once to Paris; but, on its transit, a valuable and curious chain which was attached to the Bell was unfortunately lost.

An Irish chief of the name of Mulholland was for ages the hereditary keeper of the famous Bell of St. Patrick, possessing in right of his office many privileges and distinctions. After passing from one chief of the family to another for some centuries, it came at last, in its regular descent, into the possession of Mr. Mulholland, a schoolmaster in Randalstown; its possession no longer, with the change of times, carrying chieftainship with it. At his death, he bequeathed the precious relic to Mr. Adam M'Clean of Belfast, whose family long possessed it.

The history of this Bell from the earliest times—with a coloured illustration of it, and of the four sides of the jewelled shrine which encloses it—has been written by Dr. Reeves, Dean of Armagh, and published in 1862 by Messrs. Ward & Co. of Belfast.

JOHN ROBINSON M'CLEAN.—The only other member of this family who rose to distinction was Mr. John Robinson M'Clean. He was a son of Francis M'Clean, who occupied as a hardware shop the centre one of the three into which the old Bank Buildings were divided, the whole now comprising a very large drapery establishment. The following notice of Mr. M'Clean has been written by the late Mr. H. Greer, and is, it may be presumed, correct:—

“Mr. John R. M'Clean, C.E., was a very successful and distinguished civil engineer. He offered himself, in the year 1857, for the representation of his native town, but was not elected; shortly after, he was elevated to the office of a member of Parliament for East Staffordshire, realising the old adage of a prophet not being successful among his own people. He had frequent appointments as a Royal Commissioner, and was appointed Government Engineer at the great works at Plymouth, and was chief engineer at the Furness railways

in Lancashire. He carried out extensive works for the late Emperor Napoleon in France, and was made President of the Institution of Civil Engineers in 1864–5. At his death, in 1873, he bequeathed £500 to the Queen's College, Belfast, for the purchase of scientific books."

To the above we have only to add that the late Mr. Edmund Getty informed the writer that Mr. M'Clean, when very young, was a candidate for the office of Engineer to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners of his time, but was refused, as he (Mr. M'Clean) thought, perhaps erroneously, with disrespect. On coming out from the Board Room, he said to Mr. Getty, as if conscious of his talents, that he would let the Commissioners yet see what a man they had lost.

EDWARD BUNTING.—The following excellent biography of Mr. Edward Bunting has been compiled and in part written by Charles H. Brett, Esq., solicitor:—

This celebrated musician, born, by a happy chance, at a time when the race of Irish harpers was just about to become extinct, and endowed with the skill and enthusiasm which enabled him to rescue from oblivion, and leave as a precious inheritance to succeeding generations of Irishmen, the matchless melodies of their native bards, was not a native of Belfast, but, as by far the greater and more important period of his life was spent in Belfast, his name has always been recorded with pride as one of its distinguished citizens.

He was an Irishman, however, by birth—only a half-bred one, it is true, by parentage—but altogether one in his character and sympathies. His father was a native of Derby, by profession an engineer, who came over to this country to direct the works at the Dungannon colliery.

He married Mary O'Quin, an Irishwoman of pure blood, a lineal descendant of a chief of the ancient Hy Niall race of Tyrone. It may be worth mentioning that a sister of Edward Bunting's mother, named Frances, married a gentleman named O'Neill, and had two daughters of remarkable beauty, one of whom was married first to a son of Sir Francis M'Naughten,

and afterwards to the Marquis of Headfort, and the other to a son of Lord Erskine.

Edward Bunting was born at Armagh, in February, 1773, and was the youngest child of his parents. The two elder, also sons, were named Anthony and John. At a very early age, Edward Bunting had the misfortune to lose his father, who left him unprovided for, and at the age of nine, having already shown a decided predilection for music, he was removed to Drogheda, where his eldest brother, Anthony, then lived as a teacher of music and organist. He remained with his brother for two years, during which he received musical instruction. In his eleventh year, he was invited by Mr. Ware, then organist of the church in Belfast, to take his place at the instrument while he made a visit to London. It was very soon discovered in Belfast that the boy was a better organist than his employer, and Mr. Ware was glad to secure his services as assistant by articles for a limited number of years. In addition to his duties as assistant organist, he acted during this time as deputy teacher to Mr. Ware's pupils on the pianoforte throughout the town and neighbouring country. He himself used to tell that one of his pupils (Miss Stewart of Wilmont) resented so much the audacity with which he, much her junior in years, administered his reproofs, that she indignantly turned round upon him and boxed his ears !

After a few years, he became a professor on his own account, and, as his abilities as a performer had become developed, his company was courted by the higher class of the Belfast citizens, as well as by the gentry of the neighbourhood. This life was no doubt full of temptation and serious danger to a young man, subject to no control, imperfectly educated, with sociable temperament and high animal spirits, earning without much exertion sufficient money for his wants, and having at that time no worthy object of ambition to gratify. He naturally became wayward and pettish, occasionally idle, and, in accordance with the habit of the time, somewhat inclined to hard drinking. But in 1792, when he was only nineteen, the assemblage at

Belfast of the harpers from all parts of Ireland gave his ardent and excitable temperament a worthy object of ambition, and a stimulus to the cultivation of his powers.

The committee of directors of the assemblage employed young Bunting to commit to writing the melodies of which the old harpers were, in many instances, the sole depositories. The spirit in which Bunting laboured will be best stated in his own words, taken from the preface to his last volume (published in 1840):—"The hope of being enabled, by revising the national music, to place himself in the same rank with those worthy Irishmen whose labours have from time to time sustained the reputation of the country for a native literature, had, the Editor admits, no inconsiderable share in determining him on making the study and preservation of Irish melodies the main business of his long life, and he is free to confess the same hope animates him in giving these, the last of his labours, to the public. But what at first incited him to the pursuit, and what has chiefly kept alive the ardour with which, for nearly fifty years, he has prosecuted it, was and is a strong innate love for these delightful strains for their own sake, a love for them which neither the experience of the best music of other countries, nor the control of a vitiated public taste, nor the influence of advancing years, has ever been able to alter or diminish." But, as he proceeds—"The occasion which first confirmed the Editor in this partiality for the airs of his native country was the great meeting of the Harpers at Belfast in the year 1792."

Before this time there had been several similar meetings at Granard, in the County of Longford, which had excited a surprising degree of interest in Irish music throughout that part of the country. The meeting at Belfast was, however, better attended than any that had yet taken place, and its effects were more permanent, for it kindled an enthusiasm throughout the North which still burns bright in some warm and honest hearts. All the best of the old class of harpers—a race of men then nearly extinct, and now gone for ever—Denis Hempson, Arthur O'Neill, Charles Fanning, and seven others, the

least able of whom has not left his like behind, attended the meeting.

Bunting entered on his task with enthusiasm, for his mind was deeply imbued with the political feelings so prevalent in Belfast at the time, and his preference for melody as the principal quality of musical composition admirably fitted him for appreciating that peculiar characteristic of Irish music. There can be no doubt that the Irish melodies, as performed by the old harpers, were very frequently barbarised by rude harmonies. Under Bunting's refined and educated taste, these were replaced by harmonies the most suitable and delicate that have probably ever been joined to the native melodies of any country, so that in his arrangement, while we have the melody or air religiously preserved without change or variation, all harshness and crudity disappeared, and the result is a work of consummate art. It would be absurd to say that the arrangement and harmonisation of national airs are the highest form of the divine art of music, but that for its successful accomplishment very rare and remarkable qualities are necessary will be apparent, when it is remembered that the greatest musical genius that the world has ever seen—Beethoven himself—achieved very little success in his harmonisation of Irish and Scotch melodies.

It was not till 1796, four years after the meeting, that Bunting gave his first collection of Irish melodies to the world. He commenced forming it immediately after the termination of the meeting, and was assisted by several townsmen of congenial taste and habits (among whom he mentions Dr. James M'Donnell), and by O'Neill and the other harpers. He travelled into Derry and Tyrone, visiting Hempson at Magilligan, and spending a good part of a summer about Ballinascreen and other mountain districts of Tyrone, where he obtained a great number of admirable airs from the country people. His principal acquisitions were, however, made in the province of Connaught, whither he was invited by the celebrated Richard Kirwan of Cregg, president of the Royal Irish Academy, who was himself an ardent admirer of the native music. His first



volume (published as before mentioned in 1796) contained sixty-six native Irish airs never before published, and from these Moore derived many of the most beautiful of what are now generally known as Moore's "Irish Melodies." In fact, of the sixteen airs in the first number of Moore's work, no less than eleven were derived from this source. The price of the first volume was 10s. 6d., but as it was immediately pirated by the Dublin publisher commonly known as "Mud Lee," the author gained very little pecuniary recompense for his labours. Bunting, however, was not of a mercenary nature, and as at this time he was unmarried, and able to earn a sufficient income by the practice of his profession, he was not discouraged, but, cheered by the admiration of his friends, went on journeying and collecting, and arranging what he gathered.

His second collection, proposed as the first of a new series, appeared in 1809, and it is probable that its appearance was hastened by the success of Moore's "Irish Melodies." That success also incited Bunting to adapt English words to most of the vocal airs. It has been stated that Moore offered to supply him with words for the finer airs in his collection, and that Bunting either declined or neglected to avail himself of such assistance. But there is no sufficient proof that this was so; and at all events, Bunting engaged the co-operation of the poet Campbell, with but indifferent success, and he was not much more fortunate in the other quarters from which he sought aid in procuring words for his melodies. The sale of this work, published with great expense of paper, engraving, and printing, barely paid its expenses of publication, and Bunting, for a trifling sum, transferred it altogether to his publishers, Messrs. Clementi of London. Bunting paid frequent visits to London, where he made many valuable friends at the hospitable table of Messrs. Longman; he had the pleasure of meeting the men most distinguished in literature, and at the Messrs. Broadwoods he was made known to the most eminent men of his own profession. At these houses he used to delight his hearers by his performance of Irish music, and with the Broadwoods, in



particular, he was on this account, as well as others, throughout his long life an especial favourite; so much so, that on his last visit to London, in 1839, they presented him with a grand pianoforte which they allowed him to choose out of their celebrated manufactory. The famous singer, Malibran, was so much charmed by his exquisite playing at a musical party in London, that she asked him to accept from her a very handsome diamond ring, which is still in the possession of one of Mr. Bunting's daughters, and is of course highly prized. He visited Paris in 1815, while the allied sovereigns were there after the battle of Waterloo, and went thence to Belgium and Holland, where he acquired much knowledge from the organists of the great instruments at Antwerp and Haarlem.

In 1819 Bunting married a Miss Marianne Chapman, whose mother had a school in Belfast. Miss Chapman was sister of the Rev. W. Chapman, fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, afterwards Rector of Drumragh, Co. Tyrone, and in consequence of this connection he removed to Dublin, which became the place of his future residence. He was further influenced to this change by the fact that his brother Anthony, to whom he was much attached, resided there.

During the forty years and upwards of his residence in Belfast, he had lived with the respectable family of M'Crackens, to whose house he had been invited when he arrived there at the age of eleven. During his residence in Belfast his professional connection was very extensive, and he taught also at schools in Coleraine and other neighbouring towns. He was very good-natured with his pupils if they tried to do their best, but did not hesitate to rap over the knuckles a pupil who displeased him.

He never taught singing, but only organ and pianoforte playing. He at once got into very extensive practice in his profession in Dublin, and was appointed organist of St. Stephen's Chapel, besides being a partner in a pianoforte warehouse.

It is said that when he went to Dublin he raised his terms

for tuition, and gave there only three lessons for a guinea, in place of eight, which he had been accustomed to give in Belfast.

In this latter part of his life he in part collected, and entirely arranged, the great body of melody which he gave to the world in 1840 as "The Ancient Music of Ireland," published by Messrs. Hodges & Smith of Dublin; his ambition being (as he says himself) "to terminate his labours by leaving behind him a complete, uniform, and, he trusted, very nearly perfect collection of Irish music." He died in Dublin, rather suddenly, on the 21st of December, 1843, aged 70, and was interred in the cemetery of Mount Jerome.

He had only three children, namely, a son, Anthony, who died, aged about 18 or 20 years, and two daughters, one of whom was married to Mr. Robert J. T. Macrory of Duncairn, Belfast, and the other to Mr. Wright, Dublin. Both of these ladies are now living.

THE GRIMSHAW FAMILY.—The first Grimshaw who came to this country was Nicholas, who settled at Whitehouse. He came from Lancashire. Whitehouse is now a large village about three miles from Belfast. The improvements in it, if not altogether begun by Nicholas Grimshaw, were increased by him, so much so indeed that his name, since we recollect, and long before, was always identified with the place as its owner and founder. He began the cotton-spinning there to such an extent, and with so much spirit, that he has been called the father of the cotton trade of Ireland. He died in 1805, and was buried at Carnmoney. Beside the gravestone which relates his death there is another in the same enclosure, recording the death of another Nicholas Grimshaw in the year 1777.

The inscription on the latter stone reads thus:—"Here are interred the virtuous parents of Nicholas Grimshaw of this parish, viz.: Nicholas Grimshaw died 19th March, 1777, aged 63 years." (No record of the mother's death.)

On the other stone we read—"Here rest the remains of Nicholas Grimshaw, Esq., of Whitehouse, in this parish, who departed this life, 28th April, 1805, aged 57 years."

From these inscriptions we infer that it is most probable the Nicholas who died in 1805 settled at Whitehouse some time prior to 1780, and was followed soon after by his parents, or it may be they accompanied him at first. As this is mere conjecture, some one may be able hereafter to give a clearer explanation.

The following particulars regarding this family have been abbreviated from information supplied to us by Thomas M'Tear, Esq., Abbotscroft, Whiteabbey, and others, who have known many of the younger branches for many years :—

“ Nicholas Grimshaw came to Belfast from Lancashire (I think Blackburn) about 1780. He acquired the townland of Ballygolan, which he surrounded with the present plantation of trees; built Longwood House and the original cotton mills, and was a most energetic and clever man. He had seven sons and two daughters, all of whom reached a ripe old age. They were near neighbours, and I was well acquainted with them all.

“ James Grimshaw succeeded his father in the cotton mill, and lived some years after at Longwood. He had a large family, and his eldest son James married, early, one of the Miss Templetons of Malone; became partner with his father, and also had a family. Thomas and Edmund Grimshaw entered into partnership, built the works for printing calico and linen, and carried on an extensive business. Both married, and had large families.

“ Robert Grimshaw married Miss Duffin, and had a family. He was a partner with William Murphy, who married his sister; and under the firm of Grimshaw & Murphy carried on the business of Drysalers in Belfast, dealing in dye-stuffs and all the requirements of cotton-spinners and printers, &c. Conway Grimshaw was a merchant in Belfast for some time, till he joined John and William Murphy in building Linfield Mill, in which they all realised fortunes. Christopher Grimshaw settled in Manchester as agent to his brother and other parties.

“ Nicholas Grimshaw, in conjunction with Nathaniel Wilson,

established, in 1784, the first mill in Ireland for spinning cotton twist. This small mill was situated on the road leading up to the dwelling-house, and probably still remains, as it did not many years since."

One of our correspondents states that on an Easter Monday *fête* on the Cave Hill, when he was a boy, he recollects the Grimshaws were represented that day by forty individuals of the name; and adds, in a feeling manner, that of this family, once so numerous and all potent in Whitehouse, there is not at this day, in the village or near it, a single branch of the family.

One of the daughters of Nicholas Grimshaw was married to Robert Getty of Seaview, Shore Road, and was the mother of the late Edmund Getty.

MR. GEORGE LANGTRY is one whose name is worthy of preservation. He was not a native of Belfast; he belonged to Lurgan, but must have settled here in early life, as his name appears as a general merchant and shipowner in the beginning of the century. His first place of business was in North Street, but afterwards his well-known office was in Waring Street, beside which his dwelling-house stood, a large gloomy-looking mansion. The Ulster Bank now occupies the site, or most of it. Mr. Langtry purchased Fortwilliam, in 1809 or 1810, from the executors of William Sinclair, to whom it had previously belonged, and resided there for a great many years. He is known as the great improver and promoter of our commercial marine, and as the owner of the little fleet of vessels which, before steam navigation was introduced, conveyed the linens and other goods of Belfast to London, Liverpool, or Chester Fair, with as much regularity as the winds permitted.

Mr. Langtry, as heretofore noted in the history of the general trade of the town, was the first, as we have said, practically and for useful purposes, to begin steam navigation here, by placing a vessel of that description in 1826 to ply to Liverpool with passengers and goods.

We remember coming across from Liverpool in the year 1826 in this vessel, which could not come up to the quay except

at high water, and how we and many others were obliged to come ashore in a small boat.

Though Mr. Langtry had several sons, we are not aware that any one of them, or a descendant of any one of them, is now engaged in commerce in Belfast; yet, in spite of this too common disappearance of the families of useful and important men, the name of George Langtry should, and will, we trust, ever remain honoured and respected in Belfast.

There is an excellent and most pleasingly-written account of the beginning and early history of Steam Navigation in Belfast in the *News-Letter* of 13th June, 1879.

#### THE DISCOUNT OFFICE AND BANKS AND BANKERS OF BELFAST AT THE BEGINNING OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

The Banks referred to in the first volume of this work ceased about the year 1790, and there was no Bank, properly so called, in Belfast again till 1808. The substitute for such was the Discount Office, first acting on a limited scale in Rosemary Street, afterwards removed to Bridge Street, near the ground on which a portion of the Commercial Buildings now stands.

“On March 3rd, 1800, it is announced that, in consequence of the death of Mr. Robert Thompson, Mr. John Hamilton, of the late Belfast Bank, and Mr. John Thompson, late principal in the office, will become Partners in the Company’s firm at 1st May next. Lodgments are received, and the usual business of the Company transacted, at the office in Bridge Street, near the Exchange.”

“The business will in future be carried on under the Firm of Gilbert M’Ilveen & Co.”

The Mr. John Hamilton referred to above was a partner in the Bank of 1787. (See Vol. I., p. 467.) Mr. Hamilton was one of the *Four Johns*.

The rate of interest in those happy banking days was 6 per cent., and, we are told, a small commission besides. Discounting

did not take place every day, but certain times were appointed for that important business.

The name "Belfast Bank" occurs for the first time in this extract.

The Directors of the Discount Office had a very primitive method of doing business. There are few now living who can say much about it; but the statements made to us are that they often did not give to the drawer of a bill the amount in full less the discount at once, and that he would have to call several times, while the bill was running, to receive his guineas and half-guineas in small instalments. To so great an extent was this system of partial payment carried, that it is related that a bill became due before these occasional payments were fully completed. This and similar stories seem odd to us now. Banking was but in its infancy, if it could be called banking at all.

There have been three gentlemen of the name of M'Ilveen—father, son, and grandson. The first was a merchant of the 18th century, and a banker also, which he continued to be till the end of his life. He died in 1804 or 1805, when his son, the second Gilbert, succeeded to the head of the Discount Company. He is the best known of them all, and will yet be remembered by some inhabitants of the town. He resided in Donegall Place, or rather at the corner of Castle Lane, the house now forming part of the Imperial Hotel. He was solicited by Mr. Batt, in 1808, to unite with him and others in the formation of the Belfast Bank, which he, perhaps unwisely, declined. At his death, he was a magistrate for the County of Antrim. His son, Gilbert M'Ilveen, Esq., lives in London, and we believe no representative of this family is now in Belfast.

The following letter from the present Mr. M'Ilveen to a friend in Belfast, in reference to the old Discount Office of 1784–5, will be acceptable to our readers:—

"I have to inform you that, in an old edition of M'Culloch's *Dictionary of Commerce*, you will find that the first bank in Belfast was set up in the year 1784. The book says—'Four



gentlemen of property advanced £10,000 each.' The names of the four were—

"Gilbert M'Ilveen, my grandfather.

"Hugh Crawford.

"Hugh Montgomery.

"Robert Bradshaw.

"I know the first three were members of the bank alluded to, but of the fourth, Bradshaw, I am not quite certain. The 'first bank' was commonly called the Discount Office, and was in Bridge Street. A gentleman named Sloan was the cashier in it."

The preceding scarcely agrees with what has been written elsewhere on banking subjects, and is printed here entirely on the responsibility of the writer.

Gilbert M'Ilveen the second was rather a facetious man. When a bill was presented to him drawn by Moses Dawson upon Aaron Staunton, he looked at it and said, with some humour, "If Moses upon Aaron be not good, I know not what can be," and no doubt at once discounted the paper, not influenced thereto, we suspect, by the religious names upon the bill.

The Discount Company, no longer suiting the requirements of the town, was finally dissolved in 1807.

The Belfast Bank began business on a more systematic method in April or May, 1808.

There were three or four good houses standing in Donegall Square North where now is the magnificent warehouse of the Messrs. Richardson, Sons, & Owden. These houses were at a little distance from the street, and had small ornamental gardens in front. The one at the corner of Calender Street was that selected for the Bank, which had four partners, or, as we would now call them, directors. These were David Gordon, Narcissus Batt, John Holmes Houston, and Hugh Crawford.

Mr. David Gordon had been a solicitor in early life, but succeeded to the family estates at Florida Manor, County Down, on the death of his brother John. He was, therefore, a very

suitable person to place first on the list of partners in the Belfast Bank. Some of his connections are still of the highest standing and respectability in the town.

THE BATT FAMILY was of some antiquity, and had long been settled at Osier Hill, in the County of Wexford. The first of them known in Belfast was a captain in the 18th regiment, who came here about 1760, in the discharge, we may presume, of professional duty. He married, in 1765, Miss Hyde, daughter of Samuel Hyde (see Bernard Burke's *Landed Gentry*, Art. Hyde), an eminent merchant of this town. Captain Batt had five sons, all of whom, except William, who entered the Church, engaged in commercial pursuits in early life in Belfast, and Narcissus, the eldest, is the person here mentioned as the second name in the Belfast Bank. They were all possessed of much business capacity, and two landed estates have been acquired in this family owing to their prosperity in trade in Belfast. The brothers, Samuel and William, commenced a large cotton print-work at Hyde Park—so called from their grandfather, Mr. Hyde—but were unsuccessful. Narcissus Batt resided at Purdy's Burn, near Belfast, and in Donegall Place. The former is now occupied by his grandson, Robert Narcissus Batt, as he himself died in the year 1840, and was interred in the burying-ground in Clifton Street.

Mr. John Holmes Houston, the third name in the Belfast Bank, was nephew of Mr. John Holmes, banker and merchant of the 18th century.

The elder Mr. Houston, father of Mr. John Holmes Houston, married Miss Holmes. We have been told by many persons—we know not how truly—that this Mr. Houston belonged to the parish of Carnmoney, and for corroboration of this statement we found that the very oldest gravestone in the churchyard there commemorates the decease of a Mr. Houston, who died in 1692. The name is yet common in the parish. Mr. John Holmes Houston, we have been informed, went to Dublin in early life, and acquired much wealth. It must have been in very early life, as in the year 1790, when he could not have

been more than twenty-three years of age, he assisted, or was present, at the installation of Dr. Bruce to the pastorship of the First Presbyterian Congregation, Belfast, as a marble mural tablet in that church relates, adding that he was a faithful and attached member of that congregation till his death in 1843. He had only one daughter, who was married to Mr. Blackiston, who thereupon took the name of Houston. There is some difficulty in reconciling these particulars respecting Mr. Houston, on account of the tablet in the church, when he must have been so very young. The family, however, had considerable estates in the County Armagh in the early part of this century—we think in 1805. The head of this family is now of great wealth and territorial distinction.

The following is the inscription :—

“To the Memory of John Holmes Houston, of Orangefield, County of Down, Esquire, who departed this life the 10th day of March, 1843, aged 76 years.

“He was, for upwards of fifty-five years, a member of this congregation, and the last survivor of those who, on the 11th March, 1790, signed the call to the Rev. William Bruce, D.D., to become their Pastor. He combined decision of conduct with urbanity of demeanour, firmness of principle with liberality of sentiment, and was ever ready at the call of public duty. His social and domestic virtues must remain in that inostentatious privacy which he courted and adorned.

“ ‘ And I heard a voice from Heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth : Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours ; and their works do follow them.’ ”—Rev. xiv. 13.

Hugh Crawford, the last of the partners of the Belfast Bank, was, in his youth, a North Street man, and had a shop in that street. He afterwards rose to be a wholesale merchant and ship-owner, and must have possessed much property to have acquired association with the three preceding. He had many sons, and the Rev. William Crawford, one of them, Rector of Skerry and Racavan, in the County of Antrim, still survives at a very

advanced age. Not one of those four bankers, that we are aware of, has now a direct male representative in the town engaged in commerce or banking.

It has been told to us by a person who knew much of the original history of the Belfast Bank, that the above-named four gentlemen contributed £10,000 each to its establishment, and that they had soon a note circulation of £800,000. These statements, of course, we cannot vouch for.

The other two private banks commenced business, almost simultaneously, early in 1809.

The Northern was established in a private house in Donegall Place, a little distance below Fountain Lane. The partners were Hugh Montgomery, John Hamilton, James Orr, and John Sloan.

Hugh Montgomery was by far the richest and most influential of the number. He was member of a family of considerable pretensions, belonging originally to Glenarm. Hugh Montgomery, the Banker, was born in 1743, and died in 1822. His son, of the same name, who lived at Ballydrain, succeeded him in the Northern Bank. A branch of this family was seated at Benvariden, and various relatives possessed estates in the County of Antrim. The elder, Hugh, was High Sheriff of that county in 1804.

Mr. John Hamilton, the second person in the Northern Bank, had been a partner in the Discount Company which had ceased only two years before, and his appointment probably made his copartnership very desirable on account of the knowledge and experience which he had gained in that establishment. He was a respectable gentleman—wealthy, no doubt, as bankers are always required to be—and lived in Donegall Place.

Mr. James Orr, the third partner in this Bank, was son of a grocer in North Street, and must have been wealthy, and, what was as important in such a complicated business as banking, possessed a character for much commercial knowledge and great aptitude for business. The selection would appear to have been a judicious one. In his later years Mr. Orr resided near Holy-

wood. His daughter, or one of his daughters, was married to Mr. Gathorne Hardy, now Lord Cranbrook. Mr. Orr's family would seem also to have deserted Belfast. He himself is buried in the new burying-ground, not far from the tomb of Mr. Narcissus Batt; a plain tombstone recording the name of James Orr, banker, and the names of some of his younger children.

John and George Sloan were grocers in North Street about the year 1800. The former was taken into the Northern Bank, and was resident manager; but it is said that Mr. Montgomery advanced more money for the establishment of the bank than all the other partners united.

The Commercial Bank had for its partners William Tennent, Robert Calwell, Robert Bradshaw, John Cunningham, and John Thomson, and some years after its commencement the name of James Luke appears on the notes.

William Tennent, the first on the list of partners in the Commercial Bank, was son of the Reverend John Tennent who, for fifty-seven years, was the faithful pastor of the small Seceding Congregation of Roseyards, near Ballymoney. His son William left that sequestered neighbourhood in early life to seek his fortune in Belfast, even then considered the great metropolis to many of the youths of the adjoining counties. He served his apprenticeship, about 1782, with the company of which Mr. John Campbell was a member. Mr. John Campbell, the merchant and banker, died in 1808, and none are now living who can give full particulars regarding his career. The newspapers of that day speak of him in unmeasured terms of praise, and we have no doubt with perfect truth. Mrs. Hartley, his niece, widow of the late John Hartley, now in her 96th year, recollects him, but can say nothing specific, except that she has a vivid recollection of his appearance, which was that of a tall old gentleman, attired in the costume of the day, with a long queue, and having his hair, or rather his wig, dressed every morning by a barber. Mrs. Hartley says he formed one of the partners in the bank of which Waddell Cunningham was the chief.

It would seem as if banking in 1786 was not a distinct and separate affair as it is now, but was carried on in conjunction with, or in the same establishment as, mercantile transactions. Mr. William Tennent may have learned much of both in this establishment. The nephews of John Campbell were called Brown, one of whom, William, was probably that named as partner in this bank.

Mrs. John Hartley informs us that her father, the Rev. Mr. Brown, was a Presbyterian clergyman in Ballymena. He sent her brother, Thomas Brown, and two half brothers, named William and John, to Belfast to learn business with their uncle, the John Campbell above named; his place of business being the Bank in Ann Street.

She also said that the late William Tennent served his apprenticeship in the same office, and at the same time with her brother. She states that Mr. Campbell took a deep interest in all the members of her family.

In proof of the intimacy and friendship which existed between Mr. Campbell and Mr. William Tennent, the following short extract from the will of the latter is copied:—"I leave to Isabella Brown, niece of my old friend John Campbell, Esq., now wife of John Hartley of Waring Street, the sum of £200." A bequest much to his credit.

It is unnecessary to say more in this brief sketch—which purely relates, as far as practicable, to banking—of any of the well-known facts connected with Mr. Tennent's life—his sympathy with the United Irishmen or his confinement in Scotland. He was, it may reasonably be thought, the wealthiest of those who established and managed the Commercial Bank, and a man of great sagacity in mercantile affairs. He died in the year 1832.

The preceding details are from a letter written to the author by John Campbell, Esq., of Greenisland, Carrickfergus, and should be interesting, if for nothing else than as a sample of town or family gossip.

Mr. John Campbell was one of the bankers of 1786, and the



communication proves the general accuracy of our statement as to the manner in which the early banks conducted their business.

Mr. Robert Calwell, the next partner named, had also been in business in Belfast, and was, we believe, a merchant at one time, but his name is no way conspicuous in commerce. He was an active promoter of the educational movement going on in Belfast in his lifetime, and may have been a sleeping or silent partner in some of the concerns in town. He had wealth, however, to justify his introduction into the bank. The name Robert Calwell occurs as one of the Belfast merchants who petitioned the Government about the docks in 1740; this was possibly the father of the banker. Mr. Robert Calwell was a man of extensive knowledge and literary acquirements. He left behind him some valuable books and pamphlets, which are in the library of the Belfast Museum. They are chiefly on the history of the Irish Rebellion of 1798. We are told that at an early period of his life he was a bookseller. Information regarding his early life is very scanty, and the same may be said regarding Mr. Robert Bradshaw, the third partner. His commercial relations, if such there were, are obscure. His grandson and representative, the Rev. Mr. Bradshaw of Clontarf, has stated that his family came, at a not very remote period, from England—that they were connected there with those of that name of much reputation—that his grandfather came to Belfast, lived at Garden Hill, on the Carrickfergus Road, and afterwards in a fine house on the same road. He also says that, at his death in 1819, as evidence of the esteem and respect in which he was held, his funeral was the greatest that had ever been seen in Belfast, many noblemen from a distance coming to it. Mr. Bradshaw on some occasions certainly occupied positions which none but a person of education and the utmost respectability would be called on to fill.

We give an extract from a communication of the Rev. Mr. Bradshaw—"I have learned from relatives, now almost all gathered to their fathers, that my grandfather was possessed of

the very highest degree of intelligence in business, and was at the front of all those mercantile and educational enterprises which formed the infant life of old Belfast; but, further than being the originator of the Commercial Bank, I have never heard that he was directly connected with any business firm in particular. His family, and he himself, resided in early life in a place called Milewater, on the Carrickfergus Road, which afterwards became the property of Mr. Isaac Thompson, and was called by him, I believe, Garden Hill. His branch of the family have no known connection with either the Bradshaws of Tipperary or the Bradshaws of Milecross; and I have been always told that we were emigrants from England, connected with a side branch of the celebrated lawyer of the reign of Charles the First, and whose character is sketched in the prose writings of Milton—quoted, I think, somewhere by Macaulay. There still exists a portrait of my grandfather, well executed in oil, dressed as one of the Volunteers of '98."

We regret Mr. Bradshaw omits to mention where the portrait of his grandfather now is. The John Bradshaw to whom he alludes was the great lawyer and president of the Court which tried and condemned Charles the First; and we hardly think it likely the Rev. Mr. Bradshaw of this day would claim any honour even from a collateral relationship to John Bradshaw, eminent as he was, and distinguished as his name is, in English history.

MR. JOHN CUNNINGHAM was a linen merchant of the very highest character. His representative, James Thompson, Esq. of Macedon, and brother of the late William Thompson, the distinguished naturalist, has communicated to us the following particulars regarding Mr. Cunningham:—

"John Cunningham, father of the Banker, sailed a vessel of his own to the West Indies, and an uncle bequeathed to him a large fortune on condition of his relinquishing the seafaring profession. He, the elder of the two John Cunninghams, lived at Anna Hill, now called Low Wood, about 1798, and purchased Macedon in 1813, which had belonged to Mr. Ewing since 1806.

We have copies of the sale of the property near Donaghadee, now called Woburn, in 1671, which had belonged to the family, and where, it may be presumed, they had first settled."

Mr. JOHN THOMSON of the Commercial Bank was father of the late John Thomson, Esq., of Low Wood, who was, up to the time of his death, the head Director of the great Joint Stock Belfast Bank. His father, who was a manager of the Commercial Bank, had been one of the Discount Company; and his grandfather, Robert Thomson, had been connected with the first association of that description which existed in the town; so that they formed three generations of moneyers, or bankers. They were a family of distinction even at that distant period, and had considerable property in the parish of Carnmoney. The second Mr. Thomson was he who, about seventy years ago, formed the large embankment below Jennymount, long known by the name of Thomson's Bank, and long an unproductive waste. There are now two spinning mills upon it, and several other buildings—indeed, it is now so covered with buildings as to render its original appearance and the locality itself undiscoverable.

The Thomson family has been for much more than a century seated at Jennymount, about a mile from Belfast in the old days before York Street was formed, or York Road known as the way to that place. In a letter of the year 1770, "Mr. Thomson of the Mile Water Turnpike" is mentioned. This describes the locality. In another letter of the year 1782, Miss Jane Thomson writes to her cousin, the Rev. John Thomson, Presbyterian Minister of Carnmoney, announcing an event interesting to both, and dates her letter from Jennymount; doubtless this lady was the originator of the name.

We are informed on the very best authority (M. Ferrar, Esq.) that, at the opening of the Commercial Bank, Mr. John Stewart of Wilmont was for a time a partner, but retired from it in consequence of some disagreement with his co-directors.

JAMES LUKE was a woollen cloth merchant in Bridge Street, in partnership with his brother. He may have got into the

Bank some years after its commencement, on account of his relationship to some of the partners and a good aptitude for business.

The preceding accounts of the early banking establishments of this century are rather meagre. They mention only bare facts, but many interesting details respecting the partners, their arrangements, and numerous anecdotes connected with their early days, have been currently spoken of. We mentioned that the building in which the business of the first of the three was carried on was a private house. The other two were similarly situated, the Northern Bank having been in a house in Donegall Place. The Commercial Bank was at the foot of Donegall Street, a low, undistinguished building, subsequently the Telegraph Office, now one of the great grocery establishments of the town.

#### DECEASED LITERARY MEN OF BELFAST OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

SIR JAMES EMERSON TENNENT, BART.—There is an excellent account of Sir James Emerson Tennent in Webb's *Compendium of Irish Biography*, recently published, and in the main correct.

It misdates the year of Sir James's birth, making it 1795, instead of 1804 or 1805. He was born in North Street, Belfast, his father's place of business and family residence having been in that street, and close to the premises of Mr. Thomas Hughes, the father of the much respected Lady Johnston of Belfast. Sir James, during the latter years of his life, abandoned politics, but lived among the literary celebrities of London, with whom, from his position and talents, he was always a favourite associate.

Mr. Charles Dickens dedicated one of his most elaborate works (*Our Mutual Friend*) to him, which was in itself a high honour and proof of the esteem in which he was held by that great writer. It may be mentioned that Sir Emerson first brought the great sculptor M'Dowell, who was connected with Belfast, though not a native, into notice, and that one of the brothers Nicholl, who were both born in Church Lane, accompanied him

to Ceylon, and drew the sketches which illustrate the history of that island, the greatest of all Sir Emerson Tennent's works.

Sir James Emerson Tennent, besides his ability as a writer, was also an effective speaker, and his answer to Mr. O'Connell in the House of Commons many years ago on the Repeal question was very elaborate and conclusive. It is chiefly as a literary man he is best known, and his numerous works—literary, historical, and artistic—range over a great variety of subjects, and prove him to have been possessed of much information on various topics.

When only Mr. Emerson, he married the daughter of Mr. Tennent, the wealthy banker of Belfast, and thereupon assumed the name of Tennent. He died quite suddenly in London a few years since, to the great regret of his numerous friends.

MR. WILLIAM THOMPSON.—His father was one of the Belfast linen merchants, and his residence in the town was in Donegall Square West, and his bleach-green at Wolf Hill, on the old Antrim Road.

The following is extracted from the MSS. of the late Mr. Henry Greer of Belfast :—

“ William Thompson was the son of an eminent linen merchant of Belfast, and is accepted as one of the most distinguished naturalists that Ireland has produced. He was president of the Natural History and Philosophical Society from 1843 till his death in 1852. As a memorial to his eminent distinction, an apartment in the Belfast Museum is appropriated to his private collection, and is called the ‘Thompson Room.’ He was the author of the *Natural History of Ireland*, only three of the volumes of which, treating of the birds of the kingdom, were published during his life; the concluding volume, on the animals and fishes, having been prepared from his notes by his scientific colleague, Robert Patterson, who has added a brief memoir and a truthful likeness of the author.”

MR. ROBERT PATTERSON, F.R.S., was one of the first and favourite pupils of James Sheridan Knowles. He was distinguished from his most youthful days by a zeal unusual in



the pursuit of Natural History. The following account of Mr. Robert Patterson is also from the MSS. of Mr. Henry Greer:—

“Robert Patterson, F.R.S, though engaged in mercantile pursuits, was a well-known and most accomplished naturalist. His name was enrolled among the membership of the most distinguished literary and scientific societies. In the year 1838, he published a volume on the insects mentioned in Shakespeare’s plays; and in 1846 appeared his *Introduction to Zoology*, for the use of schools; and soon after, *First Steps to Zoology*. These volumes have obtained a very wide acceptance, and are in use in the seminaries of education in both hemispheres.”

JOHN TEMPLETON.—James Templeton, the father of John, was a Belfast merchant of good rank and connections. He married Miss Mary Eleanor Legg, daughter of Mr. Benjamin Legg of Belfast and Malone. His son, Mr. John Templeton, the eminent naturalist, lived at Orange Grove, in Malone. The name of John Templeton is too well known to need any lengthened comments. He was distinguished for his zeal and knowledge in the pursuit of Natural History, and every educational movement in Belfast during his life received his warmest support. His writings have appeared in many publications, and it is said that a great number of papers on his favourite subjects still remain in manuscript, which will one day, it is hoped, be made known to the public. Mr. Templeton died in December, 1825, aged 60 years. In addition to these short notes respecting Mr. Templeton, his relatives have supplied many more, from which, and the public notices of the time, we make the following extracts:—“As a naturalist, John Templeton perhaps stood unrivalled, for while others turned their attention to some particular department of science, his energetic and comprehensive genius embraced the whole range of nature. For the last thirty years of his life his pen and pencil were actively employed in the formation of materials for a Natural History of Ireland.” Another correspondent, at the time of Mr. Templeton’s death, says:—“In Botany he attained a rank equal to any botanist in these islands, or probably in Europe. He was an



able and expert draughtsman, and possessed a singular faculty in taking accurate likenesses of vegetables and animals, and by a diligent use of this enviable talent he has left an immense collection of drawings, many of them of the rarer plants of the country."

We are quite aware we have not done justice to the memory of John Templeton in the preceding sketch. His life will be found, we have been told, in the *Magazine of Natural History*; the volume or page has not been mentioned to us, but merely that Dr. Thomas Dix Hincks was the writer.

REVEREND DR. BRUCE was not a native of Belfast, but as he occupied for a very lengthened period a high position in the town as minister of the First Presbyterian Congregation and Principal of the Belfast Academy, a few brief words respecting his family history will not be inappropriate.

Dr. Bruce was of very high descent, deriving indeed, it is claimed, from the royal Bruces of Scotland.

Without going into those remote times, we have it in our power to give a brief detail of his Irish descent, which is quite authentic, and will be sufficient for the purpose. The earlier history of his family has been written by himself from papers in his possession, and will be found in the *Transactions of the Royal Irish Academy*, and also in the *Ulster Journal of Archæology*, vol. vi., p. 76.

The Reverend Michael Bruce was settled in Killinchy, County of Down, in 1651. From this he was ejected in the reign of Charles the Second. He was restored to it again after long imprisonment. His son, James Bruce, was minister of Killyleagh, County Down, and his son Michael was minister of Holywood, in the same county. He was one of the founders of the Presbytery of Antrim, and there have been seven Presbyterian ministers of the family in lineal succession, ending with the late Rev. William Bruce of the First Congregation, Belfast. The Rev. Patrick Bruce, younger brother of Michael of Holywood, was grandfather to Sir Henry Hervey Bruce of Down Hill, County Derry.

REV. HUGH HUTTON.—The Rev. Hugh Hutton was a native of Belfast. His father sold miscellaneous articles in a shop in High Street, near St. George's Church. Hugh received his classical education in the Belfast Academy, and in this department of learning he was understood to be a great proficient. He afterwards studied theology under Dr. Hanna, with the intention, it may be presumed, of entering the Church; but having had some misunderstanding with Dr. Hanna, an appeal was made to the Synod. At a very crowded meeting of that body, Mr. Hutton and the Professor spoke. As might have been expected, Hutton met with a discomfiture, retired thereupon from the Synod, united himself with the Unitarians in England, and had the honour of occupying the pulpit of Dr. Priestley in Birmingham. He published two small works, one called *Private Devotions* and the other *Gathered Leaves*. Mr. Hutton was an excellent elocutionist and a much respected minister.

DR. WILLIAM HAMILTON DRUMMOND was not a native of Belfast, having been born in Larne, but he was for fifteen years (1800 to 1815) the minister of the Second Presbyterian Congregation, and was distinguished for eloquence, learning, and fine imagination. A volume of Dr. Drummond's sermons was published after his death, to which is prefixed a life of the author by the Rev. John Scott Porter, which is a model of pleasant biographical reading. Mr. Porter enumerates all Dr. Drummond's numerous works, poetical and theological, and criticises each in a judicious and impartial manner, giving the greatest praise to his poem of "The Giant's Causeway." It was favourite reading for the pupils of Mr. Sheridan Knowles, and the writer of this short notice remembers well the recitation from it spoken by the boys in Mr. Knowles's school when it was in Crown Entry, in the year 1813. Dr. Drummond himself was frequently present at the recitations, and many other well-known persons of Belfast. Dr. Drummond had a school for some time at Mount Collyer. We visited the place in the year 1878, and found close to the house a small pottery work recently established; the house itself occupied by the manager

or overseer of the manufactory, and its rural character and surroundings all gone.

DR. JAMES DRUMMOND was brother of the preceding. He also was a native of Larne, but resided in Belfast for very many years. He was principally instrumental in establishing the Natural History Society and Museum in the town, and wrote a pleasing popular work called *First Steps to Botany*, which was the means of inciting many young persons to the study of that fascinating science. Dr. Drummond was Professor of Anatomy in the Academical Institution, and in every respect an able promoter of all scientific and literary matters in Belfast.

DR. THOMAS SMITH was son of Mr. Samuel Smith, grocer and provision merchant in Church Street. Dr. Smith was a native of Belfast, but went to America in early life, where he lived and died. He was the author of many works on theological subjects, which, we have been informed, are highly esteemed by those of his own communion. He was undoubtedly an orthodox Presbyterian divine of much eminence.

Besides the preceding, three other natives of Belfast became Fellows of Trinity College. They were Mr. M'Dowell, son of Mr. M'Dowell, a merchant in this town; Mr. Ferrar, son of Mr. Ferrar, of Belfast; and Mr. Samuel John M'Clean, who has been already noticed in the article on the M'Clean family.

We have thus concluded the short memoirs of a few of the professional and commercial men who have contributed in their several spheres to advance the town of Belfast in this century. Many more could have been added, and perhaps should have been added, to the list; but the difficulty of obtaining the necessary information, and the reluctance of many to communicate even the good deeds of their ancestors, were so great as to deter us from further research. Those described here will probably equal their successors, and not lose in the comparison, except in so far as the magnitude of modern enterprise, and the greatness of the undertakings which recent discoveries have

rendered possible, may contribute to raise them above their ancestors.

It may be that, some seventy or eighty years hence, another inquirer may be writing the biographies of the principal men of Belfast who are now carrying on great projects within it, or speculating about others to be undertaken by their successors. We only hope that such inquirer, if such there be, will find it a congenial and gracious task, and gratifying, as it should be, to every right-thinking and intelligent inhabitant of the town.

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